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In the vanguard of a race, by L. H. Hamm

# · IN · THE · · VANGUARD · · OF · A · RACE ·

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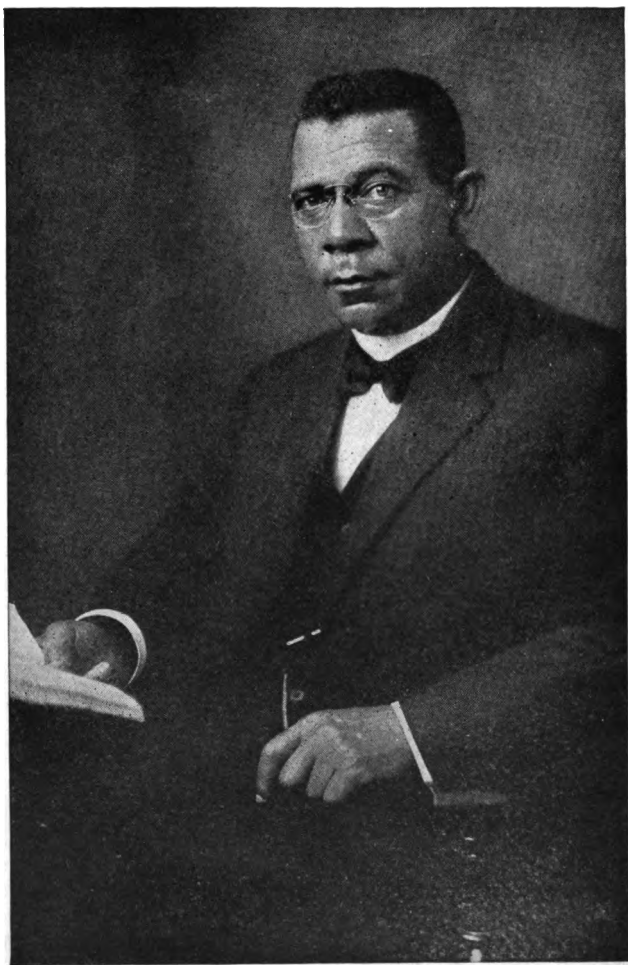
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**BOOKER T. WASHINGTON**

# IN THE VANGUARD OF A RACE

By L. H. HAMMOND

Author of *The Master Word, In Black and White:*  
*An Interpretation of Southern Life, etc.*

Published jointly by  
COUNCIL OF WOMEN FOR HOME MISSIONS  
and  
MISSIONARY EDUCATION MOVEMENT OF THE  
UNITED STATES AND CANADA  
NEW YORK



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BRED, WHOSE LIVING FAITH AND LOVING SAC-  
RIFICES HAVE CREATED AND ARE ENRICHING THE  
IDEALS OF A RACE.



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## PREFACE

PERHAPS the most striking feature of this book is what is not in it. The material for it was sharply limited by reason of the necessity for keeping it within the size and price of the series to which it belongs. Any general survey of Negro literary, artistic, educational, or business achievements was prohibited by its biographical form, in which it adheres to the method adopted for a group of books already issued.

Unless the telling of their stories does them injustice, the men and women whose biographies are included in this book are manifestly worthy of the rank accorded them. But any one acquainted with Negro life can furnish a much longer list of members of the race quite as distinguished as those here given with the exception of a very few preeminent names.

I have felt especially the limitations in regard to the artistic side of Negro life. Mr. Burleigh, the musician chosen, speaks for himself; yet there are so many others of whom the race may well be proud. Among painters there are E. M. Banister, one of whose pictures was awarded a medal at the Centennial Exposition of 1876; W. E. Scott, whose picture, "The Poor Neighbor," was purchased by the Argentine Republic, and who has done mural paintings for many public buildings in Illinois;



and Henry O. Tanner, foremost of them all, who is a frequent exhibitor in the Paris Salon. Several of the latter's paintings have been purchased by the French Government and placed in the Luxembourg.

The honors as sculptors are with the women. Edmonia Lewis's work was accepted for the Centennial Exposition; Mrs. Meta Warrick Fuller has exhibited in the Paris Salon and executed a group for the Jamestown Exposition; and Mrs. May Howard Jackson has won high praise from art critics for work exhibited in the Corcoran Art Gallery, Washington.

Among actors, none who have seen him will forget Charles Gilpin, who drew thousands of white people to his extraordinary presentation in New York of "The Emperor Jones," and whose work was listed by the American Drama League among the ten outstanding achievements of the American stage in 1921.

The list of singers is long and notable. It includes Roland Hayes, who has won success in Europe as well as in America, and who was recently presented with a jeweled pin by King George of England as a token of appreciation of his art. Joseph Douglass and Clarence White are both well-known violinists, the latter having also won distinction as a composer. One passes Coleridge-Taylor, most distinguished of them all, only because he belongs to England rather than to

America, yet, like Dumas and Pushkin, he belongs to the Negro race.

So with the other groups; the men and women written of are representative of classes. The consciousness of this large and growing body of leaders should be the mental background against which should be set the individual achievements here related.

One thing which will doubtless strike the reader is the frequency with which, at some vital turning-point in the lives narrated, the mother's character and influence have been deciding factors. These mothers are typical of unnumbered thousands from every level of opportunity, whose standards of faith, conscience, and self-forgetfulness have shaped those of the race and are a light upon the long, hard path which it must climb in the years to come. They show the Negro women bearing their share of the responsibility of womanhood to the Race of Man. The creation of ideals, planting them in the hearts of children, unfolding and enriching them from generation to generation—this, the biggest and finest of all human tasks, is preeminently the work of the women of every race. Like all the big, essential things of life, it may be achieved by common folk because it is primarily of the heart and not of the head. We have perverted the original meaning of the fine old word "common" into something to be regarded as inferior; but the things which are common to the

Race of Man and to the individuals of all races are the most precious possessions of every race. However wide and deep the separation of the lowest savage from the most highly developed man, science and religion alike declare that the things which they hold in common and which separate them both from all other creatures are wider and deeper yet.

The deepest of all our common possessions is a capacity for God. This the Negro brought with him from Africa; and it was chiefly the Christian white women of America, and especially those of the South, who kindled in the Negro women's souls that which this capacity awaited—the light of Christian ideals. Notwithstanding the evils and wrongs of slavery, in thousands of kitchens, nurseries, and sewing-rooms the house-servants of the old days found God through their mistresses' lives and took up their predestined task of making Him real and lovable to their own people by living in His spirit from day to day.

So the race advanced, in slavery and through it. To-day the broadening opportunities of its leading women are quickening its progress; yet the humbler women still bear their vital part in the movement. When we think how few generations ago these Negro women had to begin at the beginning, and of the ages through which our own women have been lifting our ideals, we must admit that the Negro women are entitled, not only

to our sympathy, but to our respect and cooperation. The advance of both races largely depends upon the extent to which this respect and cooperation are given henceforth. In a book like this, only glimpses can be given of the growing recognition of this fact by both white and colored women; but it is the biggest and most hopeful of all the hopeful facts in the wide field of interracial relations to-day.

The authorities for the historical and scientific statements made in the first chapter of the book are Green's *Short History of the English People*, Hallam's *Middle Ages*, Campbell's *The Puritan in England, Holland and America*, Wells's *Outline of History*, Kipling's *Short History of England*, and Scott Elliot's *Prehistoric Man*.

For various statements in regard to the Negroes and interracial relations before the Civil War, the writer has referred to Washington's *Story of the American Negro*, Brawley's *Short History of the American Negro*, Helper's *The Impending Crisis*, an anti-slavery book by a white North Carolinian published four years before the Civil War, and the *Negro Year Book*, compiled by Monroe N. Work, of Tuskegee Institute.

In conclusion, I would thank the following friends and helpers for information, advice, and many kindnesses in the preparation of my book: Miss Ida A. Tourtellot of the Phelps-Stokes Foun-

dation, Miss Flora Mitchell of the Woman's Home Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Mrs. Booker T. Washington of Tuskegee, Mr. Jackson Davis of the General Education Board, Mr. N. C. Newbold of the North Carolina State Department of Education, Mr. W. T. B. Williams of the Jeanes and Slater Boards, Professor G. Lake Imes of Tuskegee, and Dr. A. M. Moore of Durham, North Carolina.

L. H. HAMMOND

*February,*  
— 1922.

# **IN THE VANGUARD OF A RACE**



# I

## A LONG ASCENT

Slow moves the pageant of a climbing race.  
—*Paul Laurence Dunbar*

**B**ETWEEN fifteen and sixteen hundred years ago England was a rich and peaceful country with many prosperous cities connected by splendid roads. Ships from all parts of the known world came to her harbors bringing rich cargoes and carrying back grain, wool, furs, and tin. Churches stood in many towns, and the homes of the wealthy dotted the country. These homes were built of stone and marble, with beautiful gardens about them. They were heated by furnaces and piped for running water which flowed into splendid marble baths and fountains. The law of Rome ruled from the Channel to Solway Firth and had ruled, unopposed, for two hundred and fifty years. The island, prosperous and increasingly Christian, was part of the highest civilization the world had ever known, for Rome, after her fashion, had first conquered the wild heathen Britons mercilessly, and then tamed and taught them and blessed them with peace and prosperity.

Then came the pirates, swooping down before the north wind in their queer little ships, each oarsman bent on plunder and ready for any



cruelty to obtain it. Huge, red-haired, blue-eyed fellows they were, these English ancestors of ours, heathen barbarians every one, bold, cruel, and bloodthirsty. Their gods were like themselves, and they believed in a heaven to which only those who died in battle could go and in which they could drink and boast of their bold deeds forever.

Britain was a fat and fertile land, and these Angles meant to have it; but they wanted no Britons in it, and they left none. The churches and priests they especially hated, burning the former and slaying the latter on their own altars. They destroyed the beautiful country houses and left city after city a heap of ruins "without fire, without light, without songs."

For fifty years they fought and pillaged and butchered and made slaves. By that time all the eastern half of England was theirs. It took them a hundred and fifty more years to root out the last Britons, for the dark little folk fought bravely and long; but at last they were all gone, and with them civilization and Christianity. Britain was England now, a wild heathen country where our forefathers lived in rude huts open to the weather. They ate and drank like gluttons and fought one another like wild beasts.

They lived in little villages made up of kinsfolk, with marshes or forests around them, or perhaps both, as a protection from the men of other villages whose pirate instincts might set them on

the war-path against their neighbors. They had very few horses and plowed with oxen. They raised sheep for wool and cattle for plowing. Their usual meat came from their droves of hogs. Each village had a swineherd who took all the pigs to the forest every day, where they could root for acorns and other food.

A stranger was always considered an enemy until he proved himself a friend, and often, to be on the safe side, they killed him anyway, and bothered no more about him. After a while a law was made that when a stranger came to the woods or marsh about a village, he should blow a horn to show that he came honestly and openly, not trying to sneak in to murder or rob. If he failed to blow a horn or if nobody heard him blow, he was to be killed on sight.

A hundred years after these savage men came to Britain, it was written of them that they were "barbarians," "wolves," "dogs," "whelps from the kennels of barbarism," "hateful to God and man." In France and Spain and Italy when barbarians overthrew the power of Rome, they settled down among the cultivated people they had conquered, learned their language, adopted their laws and customs, and took on civilized ways; but the men who came to England made a clean sweep of all these things. They did not even keep many of the Britons alive as slaves, they made slaves of one another. When village fought with village

or, long afterward, when one little king whom the growing tribes set up fought another, the captives, nobles and slaves alike, were made slaves by their captors. Sometimes they were taken to their conqueror's home, or, frequently, they were sold to pirate vessels that carried them to the slave-markets of southern Europe.

It was the sight of some of these English slaves put up for sale in Italy that led to missionaries being sent once more to what had been Christian Britain, and which was now heathen for a second time. Missionaries came, too, from Ireland, at this time one of the brightest spots in a dark and troubled world. Roman Britain had furnished many Christian martyrs when the savage Englishmen first came, and now Irish and Roman Christians came to this wild and cruel land, not counting their lives dear to themselves if only they could win the heathen to the gospel.

It took two hundred years to establish Christianity firmly on the island, for now and again there would occur relapses into heathenism when some petty king arose who preferred to worship Odin rather than Christ.

Sometimes we hear people say that foreign missions to-day accomplish very little in China or India or Japan. See how few Christians those countries have, they say, after trying for a hundred years to convert them! That is not quite

true, for it is not much over a hundred years since the pioneer of modern missions in China, Robert Morrison, went there. At that time most Christian people who knew about him thought him crazy, or silly, at best, and for long years the Church did almost nothing for missions. It is only in the last fifty years that it has made any great effort as a whole. Fifty years among hundreds of millions of heathen!

In the days when the Roman and Irish missionaries came to Britain, the English could have been counted by only the hundred thousand. Even a thousand years after missionaries came to England, there were only five or six million people in the whole country—about as many as in the city of New York to-day. Yet it took two hundred years to make our ancestors Christian, even in name. We should remember this when we feel like criticizing people of other races whose progress we think is slow. And we should think of it, too, when people ask if missions pay. Has it paid to have a Christian England in the world?

For a long time a tribe was Christian or heathen only as its "king" ordered it out either for baptism or for worship of Odin. However, some of these early Englishmen made noble Christians. But it was not until Elizabeth became queen, a thousands years later, that Christianity had gone deep enough for the people to take such a stand for the open Bible that their rulers did not dare

to forbid it to them or to kill those who disobeyed. And so, all down the centuries are scattered the shining names of those who greatly lived or greatly died for the love of Jesus Christ.

They were splendidly brave, these early Englishmen. They always had been brave, even as savages, with a rough, cruel, selfish courage, but now they were brave for finer reasons. It was not only for personal gain and glory that Drake sailed unknown and dreaded seas and carried the flag of England around the world. It was with no thought of self that Philip Sidney fought freedom's battle in Holland, or that he refused, in his dying agony, to relieve his own raging thirst that the water might be given to one suffering more than he. It was a glorious day when little England faced the great Spanish Armada to die, if need be, for God and freedom. Nor can any of English blood forget Ridley and Latimer and all that noble army of martyrs who, in Mary's time, passed through the fire up to God rather than deny their faith. The barbarians had come far in a thousand years.

But Christian though they had become in Elizabeth's time, there were still many of their ways and thoughts which seem neither civilized nor Christian to us who live over three hundred years later. A climbing race moves slowly, and behind the shining banners of those who lead skulk ugly things and wicked and stupid things which most

of the people do not yet know are ugly or stupid or wicked, and so permit them. Along with all the noble things and the splendid intellectual power of Elizabeth's reign went others, disgusting and barbarous—after a thousand years! Punishments were many and horrible. Mutilation, torture, and death were meted out for petty offenses. The sight of bodies hanging by the roadside and falling into decay was not uncommon. The people lived in filth. Garbage and sewage were habitually emptied into the middle of London's streets, where it rotted and bred disease and smelled to heaven. The people had very little knowledge of washing their bodies. The queen had three thousand dresses; but most people had only one and wore that one day and night till it dropped to rags. Underclothes, if worn, were never washed. Few, even of the rich, had carpets, and those they had were used for table-covers. The floors were of dirt or, in grand houses, of wood or stone covered with rushes into which bones and other refuse of meals were thrown as people sat at table. Forks were just beginning to be known among the wealthy, and it was quite proper to eat with one's fingers and dip them into the dishes as well. Chimneys began to come into use at about this time. Before this, smoke got out as best it could at openings in the walls. These openings, which were without glass, let in both the light and the weather.

Some of the prevailing ideas of justice were much more like those of our pirate ancestors than like our own. The men who first made England famous on the seas were freebooters and traders in human flesh. Many of the great fortunes piled up in the last half of Elizabeth's reign were made by seizing unarmed ships of friendly countries—even those of Protestant Holland—and appropriating their cargoes. Hawkins, one of the sea-heroes of his day, began England's slave-trade with a cargo of Negroes he kidnaped on the African coast and sold in the West Indies. This traffic was legal in England and in America until a little over a hundred years ago. The last serfs of English blood in England were freed by Elizabeth in 1574, but long after that, Englishmen were shipped to the American colonies and sold as slaves as a punishment for crime or for political offenses.

Over three hundred years have passed since these conditions prevailed, and the higher a nation climbs, the faster it can go. We have come further, as a people, in the last three hundred years than in the previous thousand years. Who can say what heights are ahead? Would any of those Christian Britons have believed when Roman civilization was being blotted out by the English barbarians that that same race would one day stand as one of the world's great bulwarks of justice among men, creators of wonders beyond

the dreams of magic, with ideals that reached the stars? Yet all this we have seen come to pass in England and in America in these last few years.

We are yet far from where we would be. There are wrongs and injustices still to give way before God's laws of justice and kindness rule us all. How soon this comes to pass depends largely on the young people now coming into power. If we assume that our own race is already on the heights, it will never attain its highest possible plane through help of ours. If we forget our own slow and incomplete progress as a race or despise others who are climbing the same hard and painful path, we shall be, not lifters of mankind, but a stumbling block in the path of the human race.

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The part of Africa best known to us is the little strip around the Mediterranean Sea. But this, so far as we can tell, was not settled by Negroes, but by peoples who came out of Asia in widely-separated times. South of these lands lived the Negroes, of whose life at that time little is known. Few explorations have been made south of Egypt, though at one point, Zimbabwe, the ruins of a vanished civilization have been found.

For hundreds of years the upper western coast of Africa was raided by white pirates, most of them English, and the people were kidnaped and sold as slaves. Probably for thousands of years the east coast was raided in the same way by



Arabs and other Asiatics, but except along the coast, the continent was almost unknown to white men until within the memory of men now living. Between 1850 and 1900 the land was explored, and European nations seized it for themselves as though the people who had lived there for thousands of years had no rights in it at all. The only parts of Africa still belonging to Negroes are Abyssinia and the little country of Liberia. These fifty years and the twenty following have seen thousands of white men from Europe and America flocking in—missionaries, explorers, traders, men bent on service and men bent on ruthless gain—until Africa's geography and races are fairly well known.

The oldest races are the pygmies of the Congo and of South Africa. They are a queer little folk who, Professor Elliot says in his *Prehistoric Man*, "seem to have been the very first race to understand and realize the importance of botany." Their knowledge of plants is quite wonderful. They are also "clever artists and musicians, and may be the inventors of the first violin." But they are a very savage little people for all that and very deadly to their enemies by reason of their cunningly-poisoned weapons. Between them and the Zulus and people of Uganda, the most highly developed of the many African races, are peoples as varied as those of eastern Europe or Asia and of many grades of intelligence. Many

of them are clever iron-workers. In fact iron is believed to have been made into tools and weapons in Africa long before Europe learned its uses and even while our own forefathers still had no tools but flints.

But except for its sea-coasts, Africa has been cut off for ages from the rest of the world. In Europe and Asia men passed back and forth so that what was learned in one place, sooner or later became known in others. Isolated people cannot learn very fast, and Africa, in some respects ahead of Europe when we were all savages together, seems to have stood still while other countries have forged far ahead of her.

Among Americans the first knowledge of Africans came through the Negroes who had been stolen from their homes by Dutch and English pirates and sold in the colonies as slaves. Later, Americans joined in this trade. It must be remembered that Christian nations had no idea, in those days, that they should behave like Christians to savages. Wicked things went on because good people did not understand it was their duty to stop them. When some of the unjust things still allowed by Christian people are put a stop to, it will be by the same steps that ended first the slave-trade and then slavery.

First a few people who best understood God's thoughts of justice began to talk and write and work against the slave-trade. They were mis-

understood, laughed at, and abused just as are the people who nowadays fight social abuses. But they kept right on until more and more people understood what was right, and then, in 1807, laws were passed forbidding slave-trading in England and America. Since that time England, where only two hundred years before Christian Englishmen had sold their own countrymen into slavery in the colonies, has led the world in trying to end slavery everywhere.

In our country some people, North and South, defended slavery by saying that the Negroes had not sense enough to rise much above the animals, and that God meant them to be ruled as such. But the Negroes themselves proved this to be untrue. From the very beginning, among the slaves brought here from Africa were some gifted men and women who showed unusual mental ability. Phillis Wheatley, born in Africa, wrote a book of poems which ran through three editions and won her recognition in England and America. Ira Aldridge, whose father came from Africa, became an actor and was decorated by the Emperors of Austria and Russia and by the King of Prussia. Edmund Kean, the great English actor, played *Iago* to his *Othello*. Sojourner Truth, born in Africa, and Frederick Douglass, born a slave in Maryland, both became famous as speakers against slavery. Douglass was well known in England, and in his later life he not

only saw his great hope for his people realized, but found himself their trusted leader. Harriet Tubman, born a slave in Maryland, ran away when about twenty years old; but instead of enjoying a peaceful freedom, she spent her life, until the Civil War, in helping others of her people to freedom, often at the cost of great risk and hardship to herself. She showed an ability, courage, and resourcefulness which would have been remarkable anywhere. In the Revolutionary War, Negroes fought bravely, as they have in every subsequent war of ours.

Many of the old slaves were noted for their eloquence as preachers. John Chavis, of North Carolina, was the first home missionary of the Presbyterian Church; and John Stewart, who went as a missionary to the Indians, is said to have been the first missionary of the Methodist Church. Cæsar Blackwell, an Alabama slave, was bought by the Alabama Baptist Convention for \$1,000. As he could not be set free, a white man was made his guardian, and he was given practical freedom, traveling with the white preachers and helping them in their work. Amanda Smith, another slave, became a great evangelist, preaching not only in America, but in England, India, and Africa. John Jasper, of Richmond, a slave for fifty-two years and a preacher for sixty, had the respect of all Richmond, white and black; and Jack, another Vir-

ginia slave, born in Africa, was considered by men of both races the best preacher in his county. Many white people were converted under him, and plantation owners, instead of punishing their slaves who did wrong, sent them to Jack to be disciplined. The white people of his county bought his freedom and gave him a house and land, that he might give his whole time to his work. Alexander Crummell, whose father was a native African, graduated from Cambridge, England, and went to Africa as a missionary. Afterward he came back to America and was long the rector of an Episcopal church in Washington. A number of these old-time Negroes gained distinction as composers of music and as singers, some of them being recognized in Europe.

These and many others stand out from the great mass of Negroes who were slaves in America. But back of the more gifted folk is that great throng whom the white people of the South learned to love and trust: the men who gave their masters honest service; the women who kept the house, cared for the children, were faithful in all things, and whose lives and teaching made Christianity real to their little white charges. A race that can keep faith in slavery, can keep faith in freedom. There is proof enough from the days of the early slave ships that among the captives were men of business ability, of intelligence, and of various and worthy gifts. But after all, the

possibilities of a people cannot be measured wholly or chiefly by their brains. Character is worth far more, and where we find so much of it among a people, we may be sure that as a race they may yet go far. They need time and opportunity. We ourselves, the scientists tell us, have been learning some hundreds of thousands of years; yet as a people, we are only beginning to learn that first great law of justice—to love our neighbors as ourselves.

We like to believe that the men and women of loving hearts, noble minds, and heroic lives who through the centuries stand out from the mass of our own race, foreshadow the destiny of the race itself when it has had full time for growth and training. This book, in giving the life-stories of a very few of our fellow-citizens of African blood, would lead you to think of their race in the same way. May you not only respect the achievements of to-day and yesterday, but see them as foreshadowings of the possibilities of a people. How fast they climb will depend in large part on us, on our faithfulness to our common Lord, and on our obedience to His big, simple laws of justice and kindness to all.

## II

### A STORY OF SERVICE

**D**OWN in Alabama is a big school called Tuskegee Institute, covering 2,300 acres of land. There are on the ground one hundred and twenty buildings built mostly of brick, with stone trimmings. The bricks were made and the buildings were put up by the students, hundreds of whom have in this way been able to pay their way through school. Without this opportunity, they could have had no education worth the name.

There are big brick dormitories and a great dining-hall with windows on all sides and a gallery where, on state occasions, the Tuskegee band plays beautiful music. And the food in the big, spotless kitchens! The mere sight of it makes the visitor's mouth water. There is a beautiful chapel seating over two thousand people, with a place for a choir of five hundred, whose singing, once heard, is never forgotten—there is not anything quite like it anywhere else. There is a handsome library, a fine hospital, buildings for classes and industries of all kinds, a wonderful power-house which supplies light and heat for the whole place, from the lamps that twinkle at

dusk over the campus to the necessities of the biggest of all the big buildings.

There is a large farm, with barns for cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, poultry, and farm machinery. Why, there isn't room in this book to tell about all there is at Tuskegee, much less about all that is done there. One must go and see for oneself. The value of the whole plant is nearly two million dollars, and the endowment nearly two million and a quarter more; and every penny is wisely invested and yields wonderful returns.

These are the things at Tuskegee. There is also that which things are made to serve—life in the making. Sitting on the chapel platform, looking into two thousand faces dark of skin yet alight with eager, intelligent interest, watching the students march out, trim and spotless, with heads erect and steady step, one sees beyond question that, like our own, the Negro is “a climbing race.”

The students at Tuskegee come from most of our states, from the West Indies, and from the countries of far-off Africa, and they go back to all these places to show in their daily lives that skilled hands should go with skilled brains and that character and the spirit of service are the finest things in the world. Tuskegee has transformed thousands of homes and of lives. It has changed the people in whole stretches of country. It has brought hope, knowledge, self-respect,



thrift, independence, and happiness to thousands all over the South. It has promoted friendship and understanding between the races in every Southern state. It is known and honored all over the world, and educators and statesmen of many races and countries travel thousands of miles to see the Institute and learn its ways.

Now a great institution like this does not spring up overnight like a mushroom. Where did Tuskegee begin?

It began with a little black slave baby. His mother, a slave in Virginia, could not read or write and knew little of anything except cooking. She never could tell her little boy just when he was born, but she thought it was in 1858 or 1859.

There were three children, and they and their mother lived in a one-roomed cabin that had a dirt floor, a rickety door with cracks all round it, and holes in the walls instead of windows. There was no furniture, and only rags on the floor to sleep on. It was frightfully cold in winter—almost like outdoors, and in summer it was frightfully hot, for the mother had to cook for all the slaves by a roaring log fire in the big fireplace. The children ate around a skillet, fishing the food out with their fingers. They each wore one little cotton garment. In short, their way of living was quite like that of the red-haired, blue-eyed pirates who came to Britain long ago.

The little boy had only one name—Booker. The Civil War ended when he was six or seven years old. Already he had been at work for some time. He helped clean the yard, carried water to the men in the fields, fanned the flies off the white folks' table at meal-times, and carried corn to the mill to be ground. He was so little that he and his bag of corn had to be lifted on to the horse. Often they would both slip off to the road. Then Booker would have to wait, sometimes for hours, till some one came along who would take pity on the crying, frightened child and put him and his bag on the horse again. Often when he reached home, it was far into the cold, black night, and he would still be terrified from coming through the dark woods along the road.

After freedom came, the family moved to West Virginia, the little boy walking most of the long mountainous way, and all of them sleeping by the road at night. They went to Malden, near Charleston, where Booker's step-father, his older brother John, and even Booker himself went to work in the salt mines, beginning work as early as four o'clock in the morning.

The boy had always been determined to learn to read, and when his mother somehow got him an old blue-backed speller, he learned the alphabet without a teacher. He was only eight or nine years old when he persuaded some one to teach

him a little at night, when the long day's work in the mines was over. Sometime later, a school for Negroes was opened, and for a little while Booker was allowed to attend it by getting up extra early for work in the mine before school and by working again when school was out. The first day he went to school, the teacher asked all the children their names. Booker noticed that the others had two or three names. When his turn came, he made up a last name for himself, saying, "Booker Washington." Afterward he found that when he was a tiny baby he had been called Booker Taliaferro, so he took Taliaferro for his middle name.

As the years went on, the boy worked in a coal mine and later as a house-servant, but always with the thirst for an education in his heart. At last he heard of Hampton, where boys might earn enough to pay for their education by working part of the time on the farm and in the shops. He went to Hampton, walking most of the distance, sleeping out of doors, working along the way for money to buy food, but hungry much of the time. He reached Hampton tired out and so dirty and shabby, having had no chance for so long a time to wash or change his clothes, that he looked like a tramp. The teacher who first saw him did not like to admit him. Finally, however, she told him to go and sweep one of the rooms. He wanted to study books, not sweep floors; but

instead of crying or getting angry, he saw his chance and took advantage of it. This spirit explains much of the secret of his wonderful life. So instead of a book, Booker took a broom and, without knowing it, showed the teacher the kind of boy he was. He swept that room three times, —closets, corners, and all. Then he dusted it four times, furniture and woodwork too. When he called her, how that teacher hunted for dirt! When she couldn't see any, she took out her pocket-handkerchief and rubbed suspicious places, but not a speck could she get on it. "Well, boy," said she, "I guess you will do."

There followed many years of hard work and privations, but when Booker Washington graduated, he carried away the trust and friendship of every one at Hampton, white and black. He had in his heart a passion for truth, for knowledge, and for service. His power was won by doing every least thing within his reach, however hard or disagreeable, as perfectly as he could and as cheerfully as if it were the deepest desire of his heart.

After graduation, Booker taught school, denying himself severely that he might help his brother John and an adopted brother also through Hampton. He was then called back to the Institute and given charge of the dormitory for Indian boys. His power to understand, control, and inspire these boys of a race so widely

different from his own showed once more his unusual quality.

Then came the call to his life-work. Some white citizens of Tuskegee, Alabama, wrote to General Armstrong, Hampton's founder, asking him to send them a teacher to take charge of a school to be opened there for Negroes. General Armstrong sent Booker Washington. It was the American Missionary Association that, backing General Armstrong, made Hampton possible, and it was Hampton that had made possible Booker Washington as America and the world came to know him and through him, Tuskegee. Thus Hampton and Tuskegee, two of the greatest forces in the world for Negro betterment, both owe their existence to the Christian Church.

Arrived at Tuskegee, Mr. Washington found no school building and only a small sum to provide one, pay the teacher's salary, and meet other expenses. A dilapidated church and a near-by shanty were secured, neither of them weather-proof. When it rained, the teacher had to stand under an umbrella. But here, with thirty pupils and one teacher, there began on July 4th, 1881, a school which has become one of the famous institutions of the world.

Soon after, an abandoned plantation, the "big house" of which had burned down, was offered for sale for five hundred dollars. To the man who afterward raised millions, this seemed an

almost staggering sum, but he was able to borrow the money, penniless as he was—a fact which shows not only his own courage, but the kind of faith he inspired in white people. The four old buildings on the farm—a cabin, a kitchen, a stable, and a hen-house—were cleaned and repaired after school hours, teacher and students working together. Soon these new class-rooms were ready for use, and Mr. Washington sent to Hampton for an assistant teacher. Together they got up suppers and festivals to pay for the new place. White and colored people helped raise the money, though both races were poor. Often the Negroes could give only a nickel or a dime. One old colored woman, too poor even for this, brought six eggs “to put into de eddication ob dese boys an’ girls.”

Most Negroes at this time thought of an education as some magic good that would help them to live without working. But Mr. Washington had learned at Hampton that every one who earns the right to live must work in some way, and that the great majority of people of every race must work with their hands. He wanted to teach his people to honor work and to put brains and character into it. He believed in everybody, white and black, having all the education possible; but he knew that the first thing for his people, poor and ignorant as they were, was to learn to work intelligently and happily at whatever they could get to do, such as farming and the simpler industries.

He knew they could learn a kind of farming that would bring them money enough to build comfortable homes instead of such cabins as the one in which he had been born. He wanted them to learn how to be clean and healthy, to have plenty of fruit, vegetables, chickens, eggs, and milk for their children, instead of their everlasting diet of fat pork and cornbread. He undertook to revolutionize the habits of a people, their thoughts, and their standards. And he did it. And in so doing, he, more than any other one man, taught the world the kind of education that the masses of every race need. All over the world "the Hampton idea" is being adopted by governments, mission boards, and experts in education for those masses of people whose development has been retarded. It is the Hampton idea—General Armstrong's idea—which he worked out at Hampton; but Booker Washington, even more than its great originator, made it famous.

At first the Negroes did not like this idea of work. They came to school in order that they might not have to work. When the land of the new farm was to be cleared and planted, the students balked. But when their teacher took an ax and went to the woods, inviting them to come with him, they went. If he would chop trees and plow and hoe, they were willing to do it also. They were very proud of a teacher who was a real grad-

uate, and if he was willing to work like that, possibly it was not so bad, after all.

The white people, watching, were well pleased, more and more so as they saw the Negro hovels changing into thrifty homes, and intelligent farming bringing larger crops for themselves as well as for the Negroes. The white stores began to prosper, also. The Negroes were putting money in the bank and buying land. But they were buying building material, too, and better clothes and comforts and conveniences such as they had never had. They did better work for the white people and were to be trusted more. The white people saw that Negro prosperity was good for everybody, and they began to believe in that kind of education for all races. They saw that honest work means the building of character, and that intelligent work means mental growth and independence and happy homes. These things are good for everybody. The Negro needs them not because he is a Negro, but because he is a human being.

The whole wonderful story of Tuskegee cannot be told here. It can be found in a book which should be read by every American, black and white; a book to interest young people and old people and to make even a coward brave—*Up from Slavery* by Booker T. Washington. The North Carolina State Board of Education has in-



cluded it in its list of books for high school libraries of both races. It will broaden the mind and cheer the heart of any who will read it.

Mr. Washington began to speak in public to his own people first, then to white people of the North, where he went to raise money, then to Southern white people. If the test of oratory is the speaker's power to make people who do not sympathize with him or believe as he does feel sympathy, see as he sees, accept his doctrine, and believe in him, then Booker Washington was one of the greatest orators America has produced. In New Orleans he spoke before a great audience of Southern white people most of whom, in those early days before Mr. Washington was known, were hostile to any Negro set forward as a leader. In five minutes he had gripped their interest, and soon he held them in the hollow of his hand. They laughed and cried as he moved them—men and women, thousands of them; they rocked the walls with their applause; they flocked about him afterward, eager to grasp his hand. Over and over he aroused the same enthusiasm. Presidents, governors, bishops, heads of great universities publicly honored him. At Charleston, five miles from the old salt mines, the governor of West Virginia and his staff gave him a public reception to which both races flocked. In Atlanta he swept the crowds off their feet, including the governor of Georgia who sat beside him on the stage. It was

the same way in staid Boston and in England, where the greatest came to hear him. But it was not just emotion that he stirred. He made people see and love the real things, the big, simple, Christ-like things that never change. He made right look wise and beautiful, as it is, and he showed two different races the way to live side by side in justice and friendship, "in things purely social as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."

Booker Washington did the work of a dozen men. He stimulated Negro business throughout the country by his organization of the Negro Business League and his inspiration and direction of it. His health work has influenced the whole South and has won cooperation, not only from local white organizations, but from state officers, boards of health, federations of women's clubs, chambers of commerce, and the like. He never spared himself, and, as men see things, he died before his time. Broken down in body, Mr. Washington was taken to St. Luke's Hospital in New York. When he found the end was near, he asked to be taken home to die. They put him in a special car with doctors and nurses and his devoted wife. The country watched that journey, and the great newspapers told everywhere how he was standing the trip—this man born a slave on the earthen floor of a windowless cabin. He reached Tuskegee just alive, and there, in his own beautiful home,

amid hearts that loved him and the folk he had lifted up, Booker Washington passed out to meet his Master and to get his praise from God.

What made him great? He had a strong, broad mind, but not a preeminent one. Some of his own race, many of ours, were his mental equals or superiors, yet they were not in the same class with him at all. He was a highly gifted administrator, a remarkable speaker, but so are many lesser persons. Where was the secret of his power? I puzzled over it until I heard him talk to his own people one day, and then I knew.

Speaking to white people, he appealed to their common sense, their love of justice, their spirit of sympathy and fair play, their business interests. To his own people that day, he spoke of Jesus Christ and of how He would help them meet difficult conditions in the right way. He spoke of injustices the Negro often suffers and of the danger of bitterness and hatred against a people because of the wrongdoing of some. "I have felt these things," he said. "I suffered much. I grew to hate white men as some of you do to-day. I hated them until my soul began to dry up. My power to love and help my own people was shriveling. I found that hate in my heart to any man would kill my usefulness to all men. Then I carried my hate to Jesus Christ, and He delivered me from it. He took it out of my heart. He keeps me free. He showed me how to love white men,

and now I can serve them and my own people together and alike."

Riding down Fifth Avenue in New York some months after Dr. Washington's death, a crowd of people was seen blocking the sidewalk out to the roadway, yet none of the policemen in sight made the people move on. Coming nearer, it was noticed that those who left the crowd and came up the avenue had a different look on their faces—not the alert Fifth Avenue look, keen for new fashions and costly trifles, but one that seemed to go beyond the great buildings and splendid shops. Coming opposite the window of a great silver-smith, one saw that the crowd was gazing at a bronze bust. The face was furrowed and tired and black—the face of this same Negro and one-time slave. Yet there stood before it rich and poor, glimpsing, no doubt, something of the beauty of a life of unselfish service and its splendid eternal unshakableness; and one Southern woman thanked God that death makes so plain the things really worth living and dying for, and looked at the black face through a mist of tears.

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But what of Tuskegee when the heart and brain from which it grew were gone? The spirit of service which had filled its founder's life was still there, a flame kindled in hundreds of hearts, and God, who carries on His work even when He

calls His workmen home, had a man ready for the task now grown so great.

This man, too, is from Virginia, born soon after the Civil War. One unusual thing about him is that he knows all about his ancestors for generations back. Not very many white people, and few Negroes, know as much about their great-great-great-grandfather as does this black man.

When this grandfather was young, in 1735, his father, an African chief, fought a battle in which he took many captives. Some of them he sent in chains down to the sea-coast, to be sold as slaves. His son had charge of the convoy. The young man sold his slaves and then accepted the invitation of the traders to go on board their wonderful ship and inspect it. Afterwards he took dinner with them. His food must have been drugged, for when he came to himself, he was far out at sea, chained in the hold with the very slaves he had himself so recently sold.

This young man, the son of an African chief, was brought to Richmond, Virginia, and sold. He lived to a very great age, trusted and kindly treated by his master. He told the story of his capture to his great-granddaughter, who, in turn, told it to her grandson, Dr. Robert Moton, now president of Tuskegee Institute.

Dr. Moton's father's mother also came from Africa, and all his people afterwards, on both sides, were slaves. He himself was born free and

grew up happily on the plantation where his father was foreman and his mother the cook for "the big house."

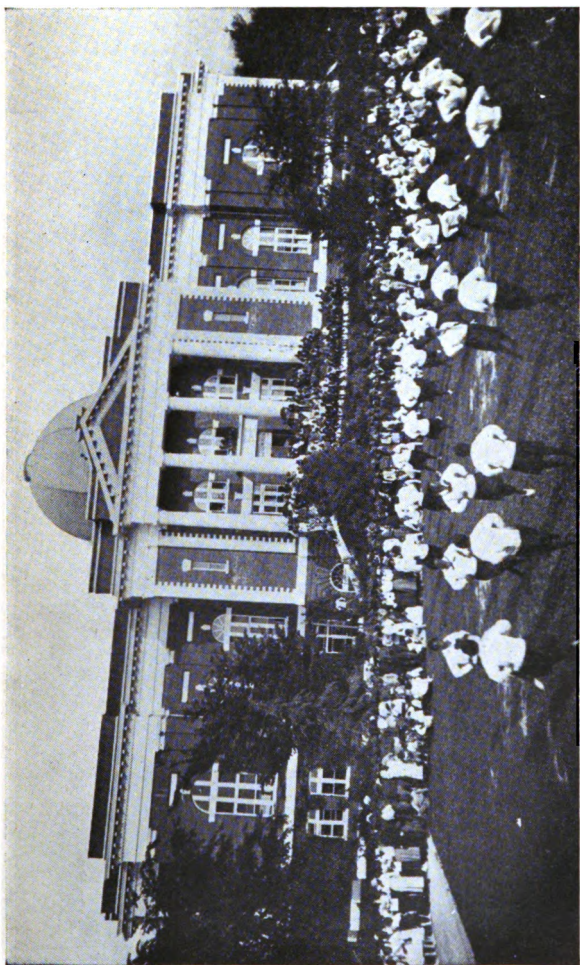
His mother had learned to read, and she taught her little son at night by the light of a pineknot fire. When at length the white folks in the big house found this out, one of the young ladies taught Robert herself. Afterwards, he went to the country school when it was open, working the rest of the time, first as house-boy and then in the fields. For years he attended the colored Sunday-school, which was taught by the best white people of the neighborhood, among whom he had many friends.

But for his mother, Robert Moton might have missed the great opportunity which came to him at Booker Washington's death. When he was only eighteen, he was superintendent of the Baptist Sunday-school, leader of the church choir, and a notable speaker at religious and political gatherings of his people. This was in "reconstruction" times, and some white and colored politicians wanted him to go to the legislature. It was against the law for a minor to fill such an office, but he was six feet tall and could pass for twenty-one. The politicians said that the only thing necessary was for his mother to swear that he was of age. It was a dazzling offer to a poor colored boy, and he was finally talked into a half-hearted consent. But he reckoned without his mother.

Not even for her beloved and only child would she swear to a lie, and instead of going to the legislature, Robert went to Hampton—the beginning, little as he dreamed it, of a far more distinguished career.

The next years were filled with hard study and harder work in the school lumber mill and at all sorts of jobs in summer. One whole year he took off, teaching a country school. On graduation, young Moton made so fine a record that he was offered the position of assistant to the commandant, the white officer in charge of the students' discipline. When the commandant resigned, Major Moton, as he was then called, took his place. There were many Indians in the school, a sprinkling of Chinese, Japanese, African Negroes, Armenians, and Hawaiians. The faculty was made up of Northern and Southern white people, with Major Moton the only Negro on it. To maintain both discipline and good-will among those students of many races and to grow in the confidence and esteem of the white faculty was no small accomplishment. But for twenty-seven years it was done.

North and South, Major Moton made friends for the school, speaking before audiences of white and of black people. In Virginia he drew into the Negro Organization Society all the scattered colored societies—educational, economic, secret, and open—to work together for “better schools, bet-



**TUSKEGEE NORMAL AND INDUSTRIAL INSTITUTE**  
**Exhibition of the Girls' Physical Culture Class**





ter health, better homes, better farms." They began with clean-ups and health work, securing hearty cooperation from the state and from local organizations of white people. They bought a farm on which the state put up a sanitarium for Negro consumptives. Many leading men and women of both races have been brought into contact with one another through the work of the Society, and interracial good-will has been promoted to a noteworthy extent.

When Dr. Washington died, in 1915, Major Moton was elected president of Tuskegee Institute. He was perhaps the one man who could take the position without being dwarfed by his great predecessor. The influence of the school goes on as before, broadening and deepening with the years.

During the war, Dr. Moton was frequently called to Washington by the Government for consultation about matters concerning the Negroes within and without the army. Tuskegee did fine work in training colored officers and technical experts, and the school's great service flag is a wonderful record of loyal Americanism. In stimulating production among colored workers, in the thrift, Liberty Loan, and Red Cross campaigns, and in all other war work, Dr. Moton was a force felt, not only throughout the state of Alabama, but among his people throughout the country. In this work he was brought into contact as never before with the

leading white men of the South, whose confidence and respect he won. He is, therefore, a great force for interracial understanding and friendship. When colored men were added to the Interracial Commission, composed of leading white people from every Southern state, Dr. Moton was the first Negro chosen to represent his race in that body.

In 1918 President Wilson and the Secretary of War sent Dr. Moton to France to look into and report upon conditions affecting the Negro soldiers and to suggest whatever changes he thought would add to their usefulness and well-being. This mission called for tact and insight of a high order and was of great benefit to both races, clearing up misunderstandings, removing friction, and promoting justice and good-will.

His work still broadens out. "Speaking the truth in love" to both races, never dodging an issue, but meeting men of both races in the spirit of Christ, Dr. Moton is one of the constructive forces in America to-day.

### III

## A DOCTOR OF MEDICINE

**T**WENTY years or so before the Civil War, a Maryland slave ran away from his master and went to Canada by the "underground railway." That was the name for the chain of homes and stopping-places where Negroes fleeing from slavery were hidden and cared for by those who sympathized with them. If slaves were discovered before they got out of the United States, the law required sheriffs and policemen, even in the free states, to arrest them and return them to their masters; but if they once got across the line into Canada, they could not be brought back. Quakers and others who thought, even then, that slavery was wrong arranged stopping-places from many points along the borders of the slave states and all the way up to Canada, and many colored people made their way along these routes to freedom. So this Maryland slave, named Roman, when once he had found friends, was passed on from hiding-place to hiding-place until at last he reached Ontario, in Canada, and there he lived and worked for over twenty years. He married the daughter of a Negro farmer who had, himself, run away from Virginia long years before.

When Lincoln's proclamation freeing the slaves made it safe to return to the United States, Roman took his family to Williamsport, Pennsylvania, and there, on the 4th of July, 1864, his son Charles was born.

There was a large family, and they knew what it was to be poor and without many of the comforts of life. Sometimes, however, people who do without comfort get something bigger and better in its place; they learn to be brave and cheerful no matter what their surroundings are. This little colored boy was one of these fortunate people. The hard lessons he mastered helped him during the struggle of his early years. Now that he has won comfort and independence for himself and his family, these lessons still help him by giving him a quick sympathy for those who struggle. Much of his happiness comes from giving to others the help he himself used to need so much.

Charles was a chap who liked to discover things for himself. A little brook ran near his home, and he wanted to find out where it came from. He was a tiny child, only three or four years old, but he set out to find the beginning of that brook. He walked a great distance, resting by the way, no doubt, but he was gone so long that his mother roused the neighborhood to help her find him. They searched the fields and the woods, and at last they found the boy at the place where the brook began—a little pool with a bubbling spring at the

bottom of it. He was watching it as hard as he could, more puzzled than ever as to where the water came from and still determined to find out. But his mother carried him off home, and if he had intended trying to get down the hole at the bottom of the pool, his plans were nipped in the bud.

When he was six years old, Charles's father, a broom-maker by trade, went back to Canada, and until he was twelve, the boy spent much of his time on his grandfather's farm. He had all sorts of adventures here, trying to ride the steers like the big boys and being tossed over the fence, walking a mile to the pasture gate to open it for his grandfather, that he might ride back with him as a reward, climbing the fruit trees to eat all one boy could possibly hold, trotting after the sheep, and often getting into mischief which tried his grandmother's patience more than he found comfortable. His grandfather was his refuge at such times and usually arranged a peace for him. The old man liked the boy's fearlessness, his honesty, his eagerness to find out things, his readiness to take a hand in whatever came along. Like most men, he did not take the messes the child made or his mischief as seriously as his wife, who had to set things in order.

But play-days were soon over. When Charles was twelve years old, his parents moved to Dundas, and the boy went to work in a cotton mill.

The machinery started at six o'clock, and any one who was not at the mill ten minutes beforehand had to go to the office for discipline. This was such an unpleasant experience that most of the boys arrived far ahead of time. Charlie Roman put himself on the safe side by being on hand every morning at half-past five.

With work lasting for ten and a half hours, there was little time left for other things. But the boy's heart was so set on having an education,—there were so many things he wanted to find out,—that he spent two hours every evening at night-school, studying afterwards at home until far into the night. He read every book he could lay his hands on, borrowing them wherever he could. On Sundays he went regularly to Sunday-school and studied his Bible as far as his opportunities made possible. Charlie belonged to a little band of teetotalers, who were much less numerous then in Canada, or anywhere else, than they afterward became. And behind everything he did, this boy had one settled purpose in life.

One day at the noon hour the boys at the mill were telling each other what they meant to be when they grew up. Charles, the one colored boy in the group, and a white boy named Arthur were the only two who had nothing to say. The colored boy, kindly treated by many of his mill associates, was made by others to feel very sharply that they looked down upon him, not because of

what he was, but because of the color of his skin; so when the others talked, he often listened and said nothing. Arthur said nothing because he was a shy boy with different thoughts from most of the others. After a while, one of the bigger boys turned to him in a bullying, sneering way and asked, "Well, Arthur, what are you going to be?"

"I'm going to be a musician," replied the boy, quietly.

A howl of derision went up at this. They looked at him, poorly clad, without money or friends, tied to a factory ten hours a day for barely enough to keep him alive, and they laughed until they nearly lost their breath.

When the delightful edge of the joke was dulled a little, the big boy, in an effort to repeat his success with Arthur, turned to the silent colored boy, sneering more than ever. "And what are you going to be, if you please?" he inquired.

"A doctor of medicine," came the answer, quick as a flash.

How they roared at that! They laughed until they almost cried, and went back to work at last still chuckling and thinking the big boy who had asked the questions a very master of humor.

But both those boys told the truth. The white boy has gone home already, carrying back to God the gift which had been given him and which he did his best to develop and use. When he died, he was the leader of an orchestra. And the col-



ored boy—but you shall hear what the colored boy did.

He worked in the mill for five years—until he was seventeen years old. All this time he studied and read at night, and all this time his thirst for knowledge grew. Then came an accident at the mill which sent him to the hospital badly hurt. He was there a long time. One operation after another was performed, and for months the boy fought for his life through suffering and almost despair. When at last he came out of the hospital, he was on crutches, lame for life. To such a big, strong, active young fellow, this must have been a great trial. It was well that he had developed a strong Christian faith, for he needed all the comfort it could give him.

But often, through the very troubles which seem to block our way, God opens a door through which we pass to something even better than our dreams. Now that Charles was hopelessly disqualified as a mill worker, it was decided that he must have a chance at the brain work he so wanted. On crutches, therefore, he went to the Collegiate Institute in Hamilton. Here he worked as hard as though lameness did not exist, finishing the six years' course in three. Before school and after, Charles found time to help pay his way through school. He sold "notions" wherever he could find a buyer and did all the odd jobs possible to one in his condition. Despite his drawbacks, the young



*Photo by Lay Brothers, Nashville, Tenn.*

**DR. ROMAN'S CLINIC**

**First operation performed in the George W. Hubbard Hospital connected with Meharry Medical College. Dr. Roman is second from the left.**



man kept such brave good cheer that he made friends for himself everywhere he went, among both white and black people. Whatever could help him, his friends put in his way, and above all, the mother whom he so devotedly loved stood by him as brave and cheerful as he himself, helping him in every possible manner. His teachers were especially kind to him, not because he was black, but because he was an eager student and learned so quickly and even brilliantly.

"I have taught hundreds of boys," said one, years afterward, "but among them all this boy had the brightest mind I ever touched."

After graduation Charles went South, feeling that there he could best serve his people. He taught school in Kentucky, then in Tennessee, and at length in Nashville, the capital.

Meharry College, the best medical school for Negroes in the South, is in Nashville. The school has been, and is, a blessing to both races all over the South, for with Negroes in every white home and business house, sickness for either race means sickness for both. Meharry raised health-standards for Negroes first in Nashville, then in every state to which its graduates have gone. Young Roman was anxious to enter the college at once, but could not for lack of money. However, while teaching in the public schools, he began to study the books in the medical course. As soon as he had saved enough money, he entered Meharry as

a regular student. He worked during vacations in a colored physician's office and finished his course with honor.

After practising briefly in Tennessee, Dr. Roman went to Dallas, Texas, where he built up a successful practice. He was still a student by nature, and from time to time took post-graduate courses in Chicago and Philadelphia. Then he went to London and Paris, specializing in diseases of the eye, ear, nose, and throat. On his return from Europe, he was offered a professorship at Meharry along the lines of his special preparation. He has been there ever since, except during the World War when the Government appointed him special lecturer to the colored troops, on social hygiene. He traveled all over the country in the war-years, reaching many thousands of young men of his own race with sound teaching and powerful appeal founded both on his knowledge of medicine and his living faith in Jesus Christ.

While teaching at Meharry and attending to his large and growing practice in the city, he still found time to study, not alone to keep up in his profession, but to broaden his life in other fields. He had been offered the degree of M.A. from several colored colleges of excellent standing as an honorable recognition both of his scholarship and of his services as a citizen, but he would have nothing he had not earned. Professor though he was, he studied at Fisk University, winning his

M.A. in 1913. He was nearly fifty years old at this time, but he never expects to be too old to learn. He is now director of physiology and hygiene at Fisk as well as a professor at Meharry.

Dr. Roman is an active worker in the A. M. E. Church, of which he is a member. Into his Bible class of two hundred young men and women, he puts his whole heart. Sunday after Sunday and year after year as the students crowd his class, the hold he has upon them is evident.

It is the same with his medical classes. Because of a real love for teaching and for his students, he quickens both their minds and their hearts. They love him and trust him, and he has helped so many in difficulty and trouble, both outward and inward, that he cannot remember the half of it himself. He has never forgotten his own struggles with poverty, with misunderstanding, with pain, and with discouragement, and he knows how to help and comfort others who are themselves struggling in like manner.

For years Dr. Roman has been known to Southern white people as a man of unusual character and gifts. He has stood for full justice to his own people, but he has always taught and lived his belief that full respect is possible between the races without intermingling and without antagonism. This was the burden of his message to the white people at the annual meeting of the Southern Sociological Congress in Atlanta a few years ago.

This address, published afterward in "The Human Way," a pamphlet issued by the Congress, is, like all of Dr. Roman's addresses, full of epigrammatic thought. For example:

"Misunderstanding, rather than meanness, makes men unjust to each other."

"Ignorance and prejudice feed upon each other."

"As a man thinks, not as he looks, finally fixes his status."

"Thoughts, not bites, win the battles of life."

"Man's attitude toward new or unpleasant truth is the greatest tragedy of human life."

"No man is secure in his rights so long as any man is deprived of his."

"Let us accept it as a fact, that the Negro and the white man must survive or perish together in the South, and that there can be no mutual fair play without mutual respect."

To bring this respect about, Dr. Roman pleaded for fairer dealing in the newspapers. They report crimes committed by Negroes as if they were especially Negro crimes, not as a crime committed by a criminal, as white crimes are reported. No one thinks of blaming a whole race for one bad white man's deeds, but a Negro's crime is reported as something different—something any member of that race might be expected to do.

He asked three other things which would do much in promoting fair play and mutual respect:

The first was to clear white speech of such contemptuous terms as "nigger," "coon," and the like. Courtesy, one might say, never belittles either its user or its recipient. The second was never to report the speeches of race agitators who try, especially on certain political levels, to stir prejudice for personal gain. The third was to publish the creditable things the Negroes do and to try to learn more about those members of the race whose lives and achievements are worthy of respect.

These are sensible suggestions. Hundreds of Southern white people are now at work trying to get them and others like them adopted throughout the South. In every Southern state and in over eight hundred counties in the South there have been formed in the last three or four years interracial committees composed of leading white and leading colored men and women. Sometimes they all belong to the same committee, sometimes there is a white committee and a colored one. In the latter case, the two committees meet frequently together. All over the South the best members of both races are coming to know one another. Dr. Roman is an influential member of the Tennessee state committee, and the white men who serve with him believe in him. One of these men, Dr. Kirkland, the chancellor of Vanderbilt University, said of him that he had the respect and esteem of the thoughtful men of both races, and that his life



and work had done much for the uplift of his race.

Dr. Roman's own people have honored him in many ways. Layman though he is, his Church sent him as fraternal messenger to the Canadian Methodist Church and also as a delegate to the Ecumenical Methodist Conference which met in Toronto in 1911. His fraternal address was widely commented on in the Canadian papers as of remarkable eloquence without regard to the speaker's race. He has served as president of the National Negro Medical Association and has done much to raise the standards of health and sanitation among his people. Dr. Roman is much sought after as a speaker at Negro colleges, North and South. His addresses make, not only for better living and higher standards within his own race, but also for helpful relations of the two races one with another. He has written much for the best class of Negro publications. A book written by him on American civilization and the Negro has won high praise.

Dr. Roman does not propose to grow old if he lives to be a hundred. He thinks hard work, hard study, and helping others, if wisely mixed and regularly taken, is a better elixir of youth than Ponce de Leon's fabled fountain. He is still in full vigor, still studying, still growing, still broadening his service to his fellow man.

#### IV, SAVING AN IDEA

**S**OME people seem born to get those things done which nobody else would even attempt.

Some driving force within sends them out on a new, untried, hard way, on what seems to all their friends to be a wild-goose chase. To them, however, it is a veritable quest of the Holy Grail. They go from one difficulty to another, with no better sense, the onlookers think, than to tackle the impossible; and then, all at once, when the wild project is thought to be dead and as good as buried, the thing, in some amazing way, is done—a success beyond dispute. Then people begin to praise it and the doer of it, and forget that they said it couldn't be done. That is what happened to Nannie Burroughs and her big idea. She says the Lord worked it out, and that it couldn't possibly have been done without prayer and faith.

Nannie was born in Orange, Virginia. Her mother's people and her father's belonged to that small and fortunate class of ex-slaves whose energy and ability enabled them to start towards prosperity almost as soon as the war which freed them was over. When she was still a very little girl, one of her grandfathers owned a good farm,

and the other made a comfortable living as a skilled carpenter. Her mother, left with her little girl to provide for, could have been supported by either of these men, but she was unwilling to be dependent on relatives; and besides, she wanted her child to have a better education than the country town could afford. When Nannie was five years old, her mother went to Washington. Here she worked and kept her child in school until Nannie graduated with honor from high school.

The young girl took a thorough business course, and special work in domestic science. She wanted to teach the latter branches, and as she had led her class in all her work, she was given to understand that if she would take this special preparation, she would be made assistant teacher of domestic science in the high school. The position was given, however, to some one else, who, it was rumored, had "pull" with the authorities.

"I can't tell you how it broke me up," she said. "I had my life all planned out—to settle down in Washington with my mother, do that easy, pleasant work, draw a good salary, and be comfortable the rest of my life, with no responsibilities to weigh me down. I never would have done the thing I have done; I would not even have thought of it.

"But somehow, an idea was struck out of the suffering of that disappointment—that I would



**MISS NANNIE H. BURROUGHS**



some day have a school here in Washington that politics had nothing to do with, and that would give all sorts of girls a fair chance and help them overcome whatever handicaps they might have. It came to me like a flash of light, and I knew I was to do that thing when the time came. But I couldn't do it yet, so I just put the idea away in the back of my head and left it there."

She went to Philadelphia and worked in an office for a year. Then she went to Louisville, Kentucky, where, at the headquarters of the National Baptist Convention of the Colored Church, she became bookkeeper and editorial secretary. Like her mother, she had been a devoted church member from childhood, and she put her energy, her training, and her great gifts into the service of her church.

But even the heavy official work for both the men's and the women's conventions could not consume the energy of this human dynamo.

Because she had had such good opportunities at school and knew so much about right ways of living, Miss Burroughs felt a responsibility toward helping those who had had no chance to learn. She was teaching in Sunday-school and was being asked to talk at all kinds of church meetings. "But what's the sense of talk," she said, "if you don't do something? You talk, and people get stirred up and think they'd like to do something, and that makes them feel good, and they go off

happy and satisfied, feeling as though they're some account in the world because they've felt like doing something—and they haven't done one thing to help one soul alive. If you're going to be a Christian, you've got to do something week-days as well as talk and feel about it Sundays."

So she organized a Woman's Industrial Club. They rented a house and served cheap, wholesome lunches for colored working-folk. In the evenings she taught domestic science there. She started a class in millinery and a class in what she called, "every-day things needed in the home." This included sanitation, hygiene, suitable dress, care of children, cooking, sewing, and laundry work. The women of the Industrial Club, her helpers and backers, each paid ten cents a week toward the work, and she managed the rest of it herself. She carried on this work during the nine years she lived in Louisville.

One day one of the leading white women of the city came into her office and asked if she was running the cooking-school at the colored women's club. When Miss Burroughs said yes, the woman asked how she got the money for it.

"Why, we club women pay ten cents a week, and we make pies and cakes and sell them."

"Well," said the white woman, "don't give your lessons for nothing any longer. People value more highly that which they pay for. If they can afford only a penny, let them pay that. I will pay you

regularly for every pupil you have, so that you can get whatever you need for the school."

After this, the club grew until Miss Burroughs was forced to put others in charge of the classes, merely supervising the work herself.

In 1900 she went to the annual meeting of the Colored Baptist Convention and gave a talk which seems to have electrified the assembly. As one result, she was made secretary of the Woman's Auxiliary, a small and feeble missionary organization of this great Church which had raised the year before just \$15 for the general mission work of the denomination. She has been its secretary ever since. In her first year as secretary, the women raised over \$1,000. In 1920 they raised over \$50,000, and in the twenty years of her leadership they have put \$366,000 into the missionary treasury of their Church.

But while Miss Burroughs worked with enthusiasm and energy for her denomination, she wanted to enlist her churchwomen in something which would draw together and help all the women of her race.

That idea of a school for girls who needed help had been tucked away for some time in the back of her head; now she took it out and considered it.

There were schools for colored girls, of course; but they were, for the most part, founded and all were largely supported by white people. While Miss Burroughs knew how invaluable this help to



her race had been, and is, yet she felt that the Negroes were far enough along now to begin to do more for themselves.

The year after she became secretary of the Woman's Auxiliary, she tried to get her Baptist women together as a starting point for this broader work.

"We will work harder than ever for the foreign fields of our Church," she said; "but let us start a national school for girls here at home—not a Baptist school, but one that all Negro women, of every creed, can come together on. We don't know what we can do until we all get together."

But the women would not listen. They would have none of Miss Burroughs' school. They were Baptists, working for the great Baptist Church. Again she put her idea away in the back of her head for safe-keeping and returned to her work in Louisville and to the building up of her Baptist organization in the one direction it was as yet willing to take—that of Baptist good works.

Five years later the Auxiliary was raising \$13,000 a year. The women had just put up a brick building for some of their mission work in Africa. Miss Burroughs told them that they needed to help girls here in America as well as in Africa, and that if they had the school she proposed, they could bring girls here from Africa and prepare them to go back as missionaries. They liked that idea and proposed to rent a little cot-

tage somewhere and put some African girls in it to be trained as Baptist missionaries.

"That's not my idea," said the secretary. "It must be national, not Baptist,—something all colored women can do for all colored girls."

They appointed a committee. "You know," she said, with a flash of the laughter that is always ready to bubble up, "when we women just must dodge an issue, we put it over on a committee. But when the committee met in Louisville, in January, 1907, they endorsed the plan I suggested." When Miss Burroughs had her vacation that summer, she went to Washington to look for a site. With a horse and buggy she drove all over that part of the District, and found a hill site.

"Somehow I felt the school had to be set on a hill. It was all red gullies up here and a sight to see, with a dilapidated eight-room house atop of it all; but there were six acres of land and this beautiful view. It was for sale for \$6,500, \$500 to be paid in ten days and \$500 more twenty days later; the remainder could wait at interest. I took it."

"Had the women given you the money?"

"Why, no, not a cent."

"Had you saved all that yourself?"

Again that look of flashing laughter.

"Why, no; I hadn't saved any money. I'd had too many things to do with my money. I had saved an idea."

"I see. But what about the \$500?"

"I went to Louisville and raised it. my own people—yes. You see"—soberly prayed about this thing for a long time. God wanted me to go ahead, and I knew it. what I could and trusted Him, He would through. And He did."

She stayed on in Louisville for two years. the whole \$6,500 was raised and the paid for. Then she went to Washington. opened her school in October, 1909, with pupils. The property is vested in a self-perpetuating board of trust, the majority of the members being women. If the board is ever dissolved goes to the Baptist Convention and the Woman's Auxiliary jointly, to be used for educational purposes.

Both races bewailed Miss Burroughs' leaving Louisville. She was offered a site for her school as a gift if she would stay, but she felt that as a national institution, it should be in the nation's capital. The *Louisville Courier-Journal*, one of the most distinguished papers of the South, paid her a remarkable tribute: "Probably no woman's organization in Louisville or, for that matter, elsewhere is doing as much practical, far-reaching good" as the organization founded by "this remarkable young colored woman, Miss Nannie Burroughs."

Of course the school grew. And its young prin-

cipal, still secretary of the Women's Auxiliary and having to raise money for her teachers' salaries, must provide means for enlargement. She decided to turn an old stable back of the house into classrooms and a dormitory.

But for once it looked as though she must fail. The women who had wanted the school to be a Baptist training-school did not call it the National Training School, as Miss Burroughs did. Most of them just called it, "Nannie Burroughs' school" and washed their hands of it. But one Baptist woman stood by her. When things looked most hopeless, Mrs. Maggie L. Walker, the woman banker of Richmond, gave her \$500 on condition that she would not tell any one who gave it to her. That started the fund, and soon all the money needed was in hand.

"I had to keep my promise, of course," said Miss Burroughs, "and not say a word. But you see what I did."

My eyes followed hers to a substantial, well-painted building which bore above its white columns the legend, "Maggie L. Walker Hall"—a monument to a woman's faith in a woman and in her idea of service.

The briars and weeds were gone by this time; the girls were cultivating a three-acre garden and canning the surplus yield; they had filled the gullies themselves, students and teachers; they had set out trees; and soft green slopes covered the

once-bare hill. Concrete walks came next, and then Pioneer Hall, built new from the ground up, three stories and a basement. A white man lent the money for this building, but colored people paid for it. During the war two additional acres were purchased, with a dwelling which was remodeled for sleeping-rooms, industries, and a clubroom. The Northern Baptist white women then offered \$3,500 for a model cottage to be used in the domestic science work. Negroes added \$500 for the building and furnished the cottage tastefully. The senior class in domestic science runs the Home on a practical and profitable basis. Conventions meeting in Washington and all sorts of local organizations, clubs, and groups come out for luncheons and dinners. The girls serve them, and the money goes to the school.

One day a Washington bank called up Miss Burroughs and told her they had \$1,000 for her.

"For me?" she gasped. "Where'd you get it? Are you sure it's for me?"

"It's for Nannie H. Burroughs of the National Training School. Come down here and we'll tell you what we know about it."

She lost no time. The money, she learned, came from the estate of a white Californian who had left a certain sum for work begun and developed by Negroes who showed initiative and vision. A colored man had told the executors about Miss Burroughs' school, and after due

investigation they had sent her \$1,000 for her work.

"I couldn't put a big gift like that into something already started," she said. "There's always a place for money—our water-works cost us \$7,000 up on this hill, and we've put in steam heat and electric lights. But this money had to give us something we never would have had without it. I got \$3,000 more from my own people and we built the community house down there at the foot of the hill, across the road. Then we put four thousand books into it, upstairs. The public schools and our school and the whole community use those books."

They showed use when we went to look at them—use, not abuse. They are undoubtedly appreciated. They are in a big room used for community gatherings and entertainments. Downstairs is a store. Formerly there was not a place within a mile where a spool of thread could be bought. Here the neighbors can get notions, staple groceries and canned goods, and almost anything that a housekeeper is likely to need in a hurry. The girls of the domestic science department have a cake and pie department that is very popular.

The community house quickens the mental and spiritual life of the whole neighborhood, ties the school and the community together, gives the girls training both in business and in service to the community, and yields the school an annual cash in-

come of nine per cent on the investment. Doesn't a thousand dollars have to be energized with vision, business ability, and human sympathy before it can bring in returns like that?

With the war came a severe testing of the quality of the work the school was doing for the souls of the students. The bitter cold of the war-winter put the school pump quite out of commission—this was before the \$7,000 water-works went in. All winter long—and how long that winter lasted!—teachers and girls carried in buckets every drop of water used on the place from the neighborhood springs and wells up that steep, icy hill to the tank in the third story of Pioneer Hall: water for cooking, bathing, laundry, dish-washing, cleaning for a hundred and fifty people. “And we all kept clean, and we all kept sweet,” said Miss Burroughs, who did her full share of water-carrying.

They carried coal, too,—all of them, Miss Burroughs included,—for the coal companies, hard pressed for labor, refused to carry coal up the difficult hill. They would dump it at the bottom, at the entrance to the grounds, or they would not deliver it at all.

“I just explained it to the girls,” said the principal. “I showed them it was really a part of our service to our country,—and a mighty small part compared to what our boys were doing without a word of complaint,—and they caught the spirit and the coal-scuttles too. We all did. We

brought every piece of coal the school used that winter all the way up this hill. Not a man on the place, you understand. We carried coal and water, tended to our pigs and chickens, cooked, cleaned, and did our school work in a cheerful, happy spirit. You know," she went on thoughtfully, "I think the 'hard' years were the best ones we had. We built more character. Souls grow under pressure."

So do ideas—the kind Miss Burroughs saved in the back of her head so long. That special idea took a fresh start once the water-works were in, and assumed the shape of a laundry. The girls had done their personal laundry with the primitive equipment of wooden tubs, but the school had been paying \$500 a year for laundering its household linen, and its principal has that rarest of business gifts which can turn liabilities into assets. Since sheets must be laundered, they should bring money in by the process instead of taking it out. If they had a big, modern laundry, the girls who desired to do so could learn the work as a trade, and by taking in outside work, those who needed to earn their school expenses could do so, at least in part, and the school could earn a profit on its investment—all instead of paying out \$500 a year to somebody else for washing sheets. Miss Burroughs worked it all out after due investigation and so convinced her board of trustees that they told her to go ahead. If she could



raise \$10,000, the remainder could remain on mortgage for a while. One of her trustees told her if she would get \$9,000 by a certain date, he would give her a thousand himself. So she did an amazing thing.

She went to white contractors, told them she hadn't a cent as yet, and asked them to begin on the building at once; and they did. When the building was almost finished,—a fine, big, modern plant,—she was asked, "Have you got the money?"

"I haven't tried yet," she answered. "I've just been preparing for my campaign. I'll get it, because God will give it to me. I look to Him, and He never fails me. It's His work. I began it for Him, I take it to Him day by day. When we need anything, I look to Him for it, then I think and pray and work over my part of it the very best I can, and what we need is given."

A \$15,000 building almost finished on pure faith—faith of white contractors in a Negro woman, faith of the woman in God! The school has been run like that throughout its twelve years of life. In the first eleven years \$232,000 in cash has gone into it. Of this, the Women's Auxiliary has given \$4,300, the white Baptist women, \$3,500, a white Californian, \$1,000, and a few thousand dollars have come from the students in board. All the remainder has been raised by the principal from people of her own race, and secured while she has

been raising the income of the Baptist Women's Auxiliary from \$15 a year to \$50,000.

Yet the test of a school is not the money put into it, but the character that comes out of it. By this standard the National Training School is an asset to the nation. No one can see the girls without being impressed with their efficiency and their spirit of service. It is hard to estimate the loss to both races from lack of room at the school for those who apply for admission.

"But I believe," says the woman who has built all this out of the idea she saved so carefully, "that some day God will move some white person to give the school something big—endowment and equipment to do the best work it is capable of. I've felt all along that if we colored people could start it and prove that it is worth while and would do our very best for it, that before I am clean worn out and can't do any more, He would put it into the heart of some one of His rich white children to do what we can't—endow it and make it a permanent help to my people and my country after I'm dead and gone. I pray for that, and I'm trusting for it, too. But I'm not asking anybody but God for it. It must come from Him."

Miss Burroughs is at present working to unite the women of her race for mutual service. She is organizing them as workers—including artists, teachers, business and professional women, do-

mestics, and home women in one big group, without regard to class distinctions. She wants them to stand together as women with common ideals of work, of standards of living, of service, and of self-respect. She wants the most favored women of her race to stand beside the poorest and, in doing so, to give the latter a new respect for themselves and their work, new hope, and new ambition, that, through a better service, they may win a better reward.

Miss Burroughs' influence over her people can hardly be estimated. She has dynamic power. Measured, not as a Negro woman, but as a woman, she has extraordinary ability; and her living faith in God and in all His children, of whatever race, her spirit of service and sacrifice have energized her gifts as only faith and love can do.

## V

### A CITY PASTOR

**T**HERE was once a colored boy who thought he would some day be a preacher, but as he grew older, he decided that being a preacher was too poor an occupation for a young man with brains and an education. He wanted to make money and of course that cut preaching out. Yet to-day in a Massachusetts city, William DeBerry is the pastor of one of the largest Congregational churches for colored people in America. Far from being as rich as he once hoped to be, he is, however, as happy as the day is long, and he is bringing happiness to hundreds of others every year.

William DeBerry was born in Nashville, Tennessee, where for thirty years his father worked in the railroad shops on week-days and preached to his people on Sundays. The boy's idea of preaching came from his father's example and also from his mother, who taught him that to be a preacher was to have the noblest of opportunities.

The boy had a well-developed bump of persistence. This characteristic was evident even when William was a little chap, for one bitterly cold day he nearly turned himself into an icicle

finishing up something that was almost too much for him—almost, but not quite. On this day he was outdoors, not too warmly clad, when an old Negro came by leading a horse and asking the way to the mill, which was on the edge of town. The old man could not understand the child's directions, and William, not having been out long enough to realize how cold it was, became suddenly fired with a great ambition. He offered to go with the man to the mill if he could ride the horse. In a moment he was lifted to the horse's back, and rode off gloriously, the envy of all his playmates. But it was two or three miles to the mill. The weather was making a new low record, and a high wind cut like ice. The little boy ached with cold and nearly cried with it. His hands could scarcely hold the reins. He wished he had stayed at home. He longed to get down on his poor frozen toes and dance to warm them. But he had said he would ride to the mill, so he tried to set his chattering teeth and went on. When they reached the mill, the boy was just a little frozen lump, too stiff to stand, at first. "But I managed to limber up a little walking home," he said, laughing. "I was glad I hadn't said I'd ride both ways."

A few years after this, when he was about ten years old, the city was repairing its streets with macadam, and many small boys of both races broke the stone for the roadways. They called



**DR. DEBERRY AND HIS STAFF OF PAID WORKERS**

These include (seated) assistant executive and boys' club worker; Mrs. DeBerry, matron of the parish house; Dr. DeBerry; social worker among women and girls; treasurer and head of housing department; (standing) caretaker; matron of boys' club and domestic science teacher; director of music; head of employment bureau; assistant matron of parish house; farm manager.



it "pecking" stone. The boy who persisted till he "pecked a perch"—a pile of rock a foot high and five and a half feet each way—was awarded with the munificent sum of fifty cents. So William decided to peck a perch. He worked after school every day and at last received a slip of paper giving an order on the paving company for half a dollar. To get it cashed, the boy had to go two or three miles, from away out in North Nashville nearly to the river, but that was a small matter. He trotted off gaily, got his money, and turned back home, when a wonderful thing happened! A man asked him to hold his horse for him. When he came back, he gave the boy a whole silver dime—just for holding a horse!

William never knew quite how he got home; he thinks maybe he flew. But in any case, he rushed in to his mother, almost bursting with excitement, and thrust all his wealth into her hands.

"I earned it myself!" he shouted joyfully. "It's to buy you a dress with. I earned it! Go get a dress!"

And so she did. All the way to town she walked and bought with fifty cents calico enough to make a dress. The ten cents she would not take; William must spend that for himself. But the dress! How they both loved and admired it, and how proudly the mother wore it, with her boy who had given it to her walking beside her!

William attended public school until he was



about fourteen, when his father thought he should go to work. He "hired out" in the country that summer, tending to the horse, doing the chores, helping in the garden. He was very proud of having money of his own, and he meant to get a place in one of the hotels in the fall. He had quite sufficient education, he thought, to preach when he was old enough.

But in the fall a friend who was entering the preparatory school at Fisk University persuaded him to go to school again. His mother was very much pleased that her boy should want more of an education. But his father, who lived usefully with very little book-learning, was doubtful about so much schooling doing William any good. However, he did not oppose his wife's wishes, and the boy entered Fisk. Once started, he stuck to his work.

The same quality of persistence helped the boy to win in the preparatory school a scholarship which aided him year after year. He worked hard during vacation, spending two summers in a saw-mill. In the fall he did odd jobs in the hotels. After entering college at Fisk, he taught school in the summer except for one year when he was a porter on a Pullman car—a year that tested him as no year had done yet.

He went to Cincinnati for this job, and a friend lent him his carfare and ten dollars over. He

carried letters of recommendation from Dr. Cravath, the president of Fisk, from the school superintendents where he had taught, and from several white people for whom he had worked. But in Cincinnati he was met by other Nashville boys who told him no more porters were being engaged, they had all applied in vain. Yet he went to see for himself. The man who employed the porters was out, he was told, not to return until morning. He spent the afternoon looking for other work, but without success. The next morning he returned to the Pullman office.

"There's the boss," said the office boy. "He won't give you a job, but there he is."

The "boss" was talking with friends, among whom was a lady. Young DeBerry knew that if he interrupted the man to ask for a job, he would be told, as his friends had been, that there were no vacancies. So he walked up to the great man's desk, without a word laid before him his sheaf of recommendations, and stepped back, waiting in silence.

The "boss," not knowing what the papers contained, read them. Then he turned. "Are you William DeBerry?" he demanded.

"Yes, sir."

"What do you want?"

"A porter's job on a Pullman."

"Can you fill out an application blank?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then go fill out this one and bring it here to me."

He could scarcely believe his good fortune. He filled out that blank with the greatest care.

"Did you write this yourself?" inquired the man.

"Yes, sir."

"Well, I'll take you—if you can buy your uniform. You must pay twenty-five dollars for it, cash down. Can you get it?"

"Yes, sir," came the instant reply. ("I knew I could get it some way," he said afterwards, "because I just had to, and I had ten dollars toward it in my pocket.")

"Very well," said the boss. "Here's the address of the tailor. You can report for duty tomorrow."

The tailor was an old Jew. William told him his story and showed his recommendations. He offered ten dollars cash and a draft for fifteen dollars on his first month's wages. The old man shook his head.

"I never give credit," he said. Then he paused, read over the letters again, and looked at DeBerry with sharp eyes. "I believe you're honest," he said, "and I'll take a chance on you, since you want an education. Here's the suit."

So began the young man's best summer for money-making. He was sent first to help an old

porter who taught him his duties. This man, offering him a cigarette one day, was astonished to learn that DeBerry neither smoked nor drank.

"Well, you'll do both pretty soon," he said. "If you aren't smoking and taking a drink in two months, I'll give you a new uniform myself." He failed to do this, however, even though two months later he had to admit that his prophecy had not come true.

When DeBerry finished his first run as a full-fledged porter, the conductor handed him a roll of bills, saying it was his half of the "cutting." He knew already that the conductor was keeping back some of the company's money, because he had not given him the checks to certain berths for which passengers had paid on the train rather than in the station. The conductor was required to give the porter checks for all berths occupied, and these checks, turned in by the porter at the end of the run, must tally with the cash given in by the conductor. But if porter and conductor agreed to steal—or "cut," as they called it—the money of those passengers who paid on the train, the checks were destroyed, and there was no way for the company to find them out. Many conductors kept the money for such fares, dividing it with the porter at the end of the run. This insured the porter's silence and made the conductor safe.

When the conductor gave him the money, De-

Berry was frightened. If he refused it, he was sure the conductor would suspect him of wanting to better himself with the company by reporting the conductor, and that official would probably protect himself against this imaginary danger by making up some complaint against him and so have him dismissed. He couldn't afford to lose his job, it would mean dropping out of college. Anyway, it was the conductor's stealing, not his, he tried to think. So he took the money for that and for several trips afterward.

But the young man kept getting more and more miserable. His mother had taught him from his babyhood that he must be honest no matter what happened, and he knew he wasn't honest now. At last he felt that he would rather lose his job and drop out of his class than to take the money again. When he refused it, the conductor could hardly believe his ears.

"Why, you're a fool," he said. "Everybody does it. Here, take it as a present from me; you've got nothing to do with where it came from."

When he still refused, the conductor was angry, thinking DeBerry meant to report him. He assured him he would not, but the conductor did not trust him. He warned all the other conductors not to "cut" when they had DeBerry along, he was queer and wouldn't go halves, and he might tell. So nobody offered him any more money. Soon

afterward, William was assigned to an old conductor who had been with the company thirty years and had never "cut" a dollar. He stayed with this man, who turned in some report on the young porter which brought him an unusual trust. At the ends of the run the conductor changed to another car, and DeBerry, in sole charge, collected the money paid for these short-distance rides, sending in his own reports. He was very happy over being trusted—a young Negro, only four months on the road.

William had decided by this time that preaching was out of the question for him; he would be a doctor. He knew a good many preachers, and few of them were educated men. Most of those he met were ignorant leaders of ignorant folk. The Church, he thought, was given over to emotionalism and superstition or to blind ignorance, which was almost as bad. He did not respect the institution as he had when he himself was ignorant. Besides, ministers never made any money, and money he meant to have—money and the comforts and power money brings.

While he was in his senior year at Fisk, DeBerry went to Dr. Hubbard, the dean of Meharry Medical College, also at Nashville. Dr. Hubbard knew the young man's record as a student and was glad to have him enter Meharry. He knew nothing of William's old determination to be a preacher. He offered him a position as tutor in

Latin at the college, the income from which would help him through his course. He should be happy now, William thought, with most of his struggles behind him and the way to a profession clear. But instead, he was very unhappy. The inward struggle was acute.

One of his teachers at Fisk sensed his difficulty. She would not urge him, but she asked him what he thought was the need of his people for educated ministers as leaders. He found it a hard question to put out of his mind. Then she lent him Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, and the book left him with a new sense of the world's need of God's love and of ministers to interpret it. Not long afterward, Mr. Moore, field agent of the American Missionary Association, came to Fisk as a lecturer. He talked at chapel about the Negro Church.

"Some of you young people," he said, "think you've outgrown the Church, you think you're too educated for it. You look down on it because you think its ministers are ignorant. I want to know which of you who criticize the Church in this way is willing to give your life to make conditions better?"

"That question," says Dr. DeBerry, "was meant for me. God meant it for me. I couldn't get away from it, day or night. I went to Dr. Hubbard at last and told him I couldn't come to Meharry. I had to preach."

DeBerry went to Oberlin for his theological course and won a scholarship. He was assigned to a little church where he preached on Sundays and during vacation. In this way, together with the scholarship, he worked his way through to graduation.

He wanted to work among his people in the South, where he felt the need was greatest, but when he graduated, there was no opening in a Southern Congregational church. The home mission board advised his going temporarily to a small church in Springfield, Massachusetts, whose pastor had just died. He went, expecting to stay only until he could find an opening in the South. He has remained in Springfield twenty-two years.

St. John's Church had about a hundred members when William DeBerry became its pastor. There was no parsonage, but they wanted a married preacher. This suited the young man beautifully. He went back to Tennessee and married the girl who was waiting for him, another Fisk graduate, and brought her to Springfield. Of course a parsonage had to be built then. With his wife to help him, the new pastor began to build up his work in earnest.

While he was still hoping for the Southern opening, the missionary authorities of his church began to send him to large white gatherings and to churches to speak of church work among the Ne-



groes and to tell what the church schools were accomplishing. He knew the need as only a Negro could; he knew what the work of the Church meant in his own life and in that of his friends; and his heart was burdened for his race. He spoke with such force and effect that wherever he went, he made friends for his people and for the effort to help them. At last the Missionary Association urged him to stay in the North. They felt he could do more for his people in this way than in any other.

For years Mr. DeBerry's church grew steadily in members, in liberality, and in the regard of the white churches of the city. But he himself was not satisfied. He had received calls to several large churches, and now one came from his home city of Nashville. He told his people he could not stay with them unless they would undertake a broader service to the colored community of Springfield. He wanted a church that would be open seven days in the week, helping people on work days and rest days alike. It seemed an almost impossible undertaking, but the elders were willing to follow their leader. The church raised the first thousand dollars in cash toward a new church and then went to work to raise more. With this backing, Dr. DeBerry went to the white church and to white friends. The result is a big, modern church on a large corner lot. It has a beautiful organ and fine institutional

equipment. There are large, well-furnished parlors, with a piano and a victrola, magazines and books, a sub-station of the public library. Prayer-meetings are held here on Thursday nights, but on all other week nights the rooms are open to various clubs for women and girls under the care of a trained worker. Three hundred are enrolled in these clubs. Downstairs is a big room with movable seats for Sunday-school and for entertainments. Here also are kindergarten rooms, the church kitchen, and rooms for classes in cooking and in arts and crafts.

The clubs for boys and young men, which have a hundred members enrolled, are in a building around the corner, where are billiard tables, games, books, and magazines. A brass band flourishes here also. A printing-press has just been bought, and printing and other trades are to be taught. There is an employment bureau for men in this building, and one for women in the parish house.

Next door to the church is the parish home for working girls, which cost \$15,000. It contains an apartment for the pastor's family and rooms for fourteen girls. It is tastefully furnished and beautifully kept. Mrs. DeBerry acts as matron. The rooms are always full, with a waiting list for vacancies. Parlors and an office are on the first floor. In the basement there is a well-equipped laundry and a kitchen for the girls' use, with small

individual lockers in which each girl may keep her stock of groceries.

During the war the munition factories of Springfield attracted numbers of colored workers, and the housing situation became acute. A white friend of St. John's bought a large apartment house and let it to colored people under the church's management. Later, the property was deeded to the church. Other friends who believe in the pastor and in the kind of spiritual and social upbuilding he is doing, followed this example. St. John's now owns a number of small houses in addition to the apartment house and provides shelter for twenty-eight families. The net rent from these properties goes to the support of the institutional work. Recently a farm of fifty-four acres was given to the church. This is being used for vacation groups of boys and men. A Hampton graduate in agriculture has charge of the place. The vacation guests this summer have given their mornings to work on the farm and their afternoons to fishing, games, and various sports. This part of the work is as yet in its earliest stages of development.

The church members are no exception to their race in point of liberality. Like most colored Christians, they put white people to shame when it comes to "giving as the Lord hath prospered." The membership is divided into circles, each unit of which does his or her part in a cheerful spirit

of teamwork. But the expenses are heavy, and the church could not meet them all, even with the help of the rents. Including the pastor, eleven paid workers are necessary, eight of them giving full time to the work. In the lean days since the war, there is the same unemployment and suffering among the Negroes as among the white poor. Some help has been given by the white Congregational church, but for the social work the principal aid comes from the Springfield Community Chest. This fund receives the gifts of all citizens for all forms of community service. The trustees apportion it among carefully-selected agencies. To St. John's is entrusted the amount set aside for social work among the colored people of the city.

Dr. DeBerry, in addition to his work in Springfield and his wider work for his people in the Congregational Church, has been made a trustee of Fisk University, his *alma mater*—an honor which any college graduate appreciates. The Inter-church World Movement, after its recent survey of American churches, reported this church of a colored Tennessean as having "the most efficient system of organization and work of any church in the group surveyed, regardless of race or denomination." The man who is called to be a physician has a noble calling; but the man who is called to preach and answers with his whole life need not fear that he will be shut up to a service less than the best.

## VI

### A BELIEVER IN HAPPINESS

**N**OT so very many years ago there lived in Georgia a little colored girl who needed no fairy godmother for she had some of the most beautiful gifts in the world. One of them was a mother of remarkable character and insight; one was an inborn spirit of happiness which nothing could dampen and which those around her found contagious; and one was an opportunity for development such as few children of her race and generation dreamed of.

Janie's mother, a widow, was housemaid and seamstress in the home of a Northern woman of wealth and education who lived in the South for a number of years. The little colored girl came to the white home with her mother. The children in the family were about her own age, and they all played together, as would have been the case in any household while they were little. The white children found something oddly attractive about Janie. It wasn't just that she was pretty or that she had loose, wavy hair and a skin no darker than an Italian's or that wherever she was, a good time was sure to be going on; it was something that belonged to her soul—a kind of delight in liv-

ing and a love of living things that radiated all about her. The white children and their mother really loved her.

When her mother married again and went back and forth to work between her own home and her employer's, Janie was kept at the "big house" and became almost a member of the family. The children were read to a great deal, and Janie was always an interested listener. As the years went on, she gained a knowledge and love of good literature such as only favored folk can have. She was very prettily dressed, her room was daintily furnished, and all her surroundings were those of refinement and ease. She knew little of school, but her education from reading and from her associations was superior to that of most of her race.

Life went on pleasantly for the children until they grew old enough for their continued companionship to seem strange to the neighbors. The mistress of the house loved Janie and was unwilling to send her away to live among untaught Negroes. The life of the average colored woman seemed terribly hard to the Northern white woman, and she offered to send Janie North, to give her as good an education as could be had there, and to establish her afterward in some community where her race would not be known and where life would be easy and pleasant.

"But of course," she said to the child's mother, "you must give her up. You must make me her

legal guardian and agree never to see her again. You will do this because it is for her good and because you love her."

But the mother would not hear of it. She was wise enough to know that no good can come to those who run away from the obligations into which they are born. Janie was colored, she said; she had had a wonderful chance in life, so far; she must share it with her people. She might go North for her education,—her mother would be most grateful,—but she must come back South to live and work. Furthermore, her mother would never give her up.

They argued for days. The white woman, firm in what she thought was right, refused to do anything more for the child unless she were given to her outright. The mother, equally determined, took Janie home and prepared to give her such an education as she could afford.

Janie's step-father was a prosperous Negro, a worker in the railroad shops. He had been taught, as a slave, the trade of a mechanic and had been allowed to "hire his time" before the Civil War; that is, he had worked where he pleased, paying his master a yearly sum to offset what he might have been worth as a slave, and keeping the rest himself. When the War ended, he had money enough to buy some land and build himself a home. He had worked and saved ever since. He meant to do as well by his step-daughter as by her half-



*Photo by Foster, Richmond, Va.*

**MRS. JANIE PORTER BARRETT**





sisters, his own children. Janie's mother, too, had worked and saved; and if Northern colleges were beyond their means, Hampton wasn't; they would send her there.

The white woman was aghast. "Oh, Janie," she wept, "I've ruined your life! It's a work school! They require rough work such as you have never done, and there are rough students there, such as I never meant you to know. Child, you'll have to scrub floors there—I've seen them do it. Think of your having to scrub floors!"

Janie had no wild desire to scrub, and she felt a bit dashed for a minute; but her belief in the happy possibilities of life was not to be daunted. Something rose up within her and answered almost without her knowledge.

"I don't believe you've ruined my life," she said stoutly; "I don't see why I can't do something for my people yet that will be worth all you've done for me—and worth the floor-scrubbing too."

Years afterward she said she hadn't an idea of doing anything for her people when she spoke; she didn't know where the words came from. She wanted to make her weeping friend happy; and in the crisis, the deepest thing in her, unknown to her as yet, stirred to life and spoke.

So she went to Hampton and scrubbed floors, and incidentally scrubbed the skin off her knees.

"I hated scrubbing floors," she said, laughing

as she told of it. "I'd never learned how. But I had learned that I must obey, so whatever they told me to do, I did the best I could, whether I liked it or not; and I learned."

But helping her people! She didn't want to. Everybody thought it so great and solemn an obligation. Janie hated solemn things—she wanted fun. She was homesick for the old home, the old friends, the old, beautiful refinements of life. Why should she scrub floors or help ignorant folk?

Then one day she read a book—Walter Besant's *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*. All young people should read it. "The Palace of Delight" would intrigue their hearts as it did hers; and perhaps it would change their lives as it did hers.

"Why, that's helping folks—to make them happy!" she exclaimed. "It needn't be solemn at all. I'd love to help that way; and I will."

Her head was full of the idea after that, and her heart too. When she graduated, Janie chose, out of several places offered her, to teach a school in a little community in the "wire-grass country," one of the most backward places in Georgia at that time. The salary could hardly be discovered without a microscope.

"Why, child," gasped her mother, "are you crazy? That's no place for you to go to!"

"I don't believe they ever have much fun down there," Janie answered. "I'm going to give them

a good time. Of course I can't live on the 'salary'; but you can help me out."

Janie's mother always had stood by her, and she did now.

They had a good time in that community that year. Janie visited the children's homes week-ends to find out what they needed most. Such places! Poor souls, no outlook on life at all—just a grind of work and poverty and deprivation. She taught the children calisthenics and games. They played. They bought some croquet sets and learned the game. They had picnics and trips in the woods. They learned in school, too. And the white people were all kind. Janie was told they wouldn't be, but they were.

Then she was offered a position at Hampton, and in the fall went to Virginia for life.

In 1889 she married Harris Barrett, a Hampton graduate who, from his graduation until his death in 1915, was cashier and bookkeeper at Hampton. He took her to the home he had bought for her, and for years they worked over it together until it became a beautiful place. One rule they made and never broke: nothing was ever to go into the home that was not theirs, paid cash for to the last cent before it entered the house. The furniture came piece by piece, and was the better loved for that reason. But Janie had to have some lovely things to start with. She called her home the "Palace of Delight," be-

cause she meant it to be that to everybody around her; and though a palace might be short on furniture, what there was of it must be dainty and beautiful. She asked her mother to give her only the plainest and most necessary clothes for her wedding outfit, but to buy her some household linen and solid silver.

"Silver!" gasped her mother. "I can't fit you out with solid silver, child."

"Oh, no," agreed Janie; "I don't want to be 'fitted out'; but I want a table like the one I was brought up to see every day—with flowers and the whitest cloth and enough silver spoons and forks for us two to eat with. I can't have tin spoons on my palace table!"

So she had silver things from her mother and from her many friends at the Institute, and added to them, piece by piece, through the years. When her home was furnished, with a good many gaps where pretty things were going to be some day, yet dainty and attractive as far as it went, she hunted up people to give a good time in it.

She found them literally at her gate—the little black children turned out in the streets to shift for themselves while their mothers cooked or washed all day. Mrs. Barrett scrubbed them clean and told them stories and played games with them. In no time she had a whole kindergarten on her hands. Evenings she coaxed in the mothers and the young folks, who had so little

chance for clean, happy fun in their lives, and some of the men. She formed clubs for all of them. While they were having a good time, she showed them all sorts of ways of better and healthier and happier living. By and by the "Palace of Delight" wasn't big enough to hold the people who flocked to it.

All this time Mrs. Barrett and her husband were saving money for a bathroom. She wouldn't have one until she could have the kind she wanted,—white-tiled, with a set-in tub, and a beautiful big bowl,—a bathroom to enjoy for a lifetime. It would cost several hundred dollars; and at last the money was ready. There was nothing to do but select the fixtures and engage the workmen, when in came, quite uninvited, the most disconcerting thought!

For a long time Mrs. Barrett had tried tremendously hard to get the mothers in her clubs to love cleanliness. You have to love it very much to keep your home and children clean when you wash or cook for other people all day and are tired out when you get home. Mrs. Barrett never had to work out, the mothers said; she had time to be clean, and they didn't. Now if she had a bathroom—a lovely, shining, white place with hot and cold water on tap instead of stone-cold in a well down the street, and a big porcelain tub instead of an old wash-tub to bathe in—oh, she could never do anything with them again! They would say,

"You don't know anything about our hard times—you with your comforts and conveniences. Let us alone!"

She thought about it a long time. She did so want that bathroom! She had dreamed about it so long! But at last she decided she wanted happiness more—everybody's happiness, which is the only real kind, though everybody doesn't know it yet. She talked it over with her husband, who always understood things, and they decided to spend the bathroom money on a community house to be built in their own yard. When the clubs gave entertainments, as they constantly did, the house wouldn't hold the people any more. They needed a great big room. And so, by love's magic, the bathroom became a house that was all one big room and could be used by turns for a kindergarten, a bad-weather play-ground, a club house, a gymnasium, a reading, assembly, concert, and lecture room—surely the most Protean bathroom ever known.

The work Mrs. Barrett was doing broadened until it touched the whole colored community. Teachers and students at Hampton helped, and many an Institute boy and girl found there inspiration for community service in their own far-off homes. Love is always like that—a seed that grows, bearing other seeds that fly on the winds of life to all sorts of unsuspected spots. The

"Palace of Delight" came true, too big for the walls of any one building to hold.

Mrs. Barrett's work did more than leaven the Negro community: it built a bridge between the races. Long before the women's federated clubs generally adopted "Clean-up Week," a civic-minded white woman of Hampton, a leader in social circles, planned a "Clean-up" for her town. She knew it would never be clean without the Negroes' help, and having heard of Mrs. Barrett's work, she asked her help with the colored people. Thus brought together, the two women became friends, with large consequences, as the sequel will show.

During these happy years, the colored club women of Virginia made Mrs. Barrett their state president. They had a small, struggling organization with a very few hundred members.

"And it will never be any bigger," thought the president, "until it does something together—something for somebody else and together."

Who needed happiness most? Girls needed it, surely; girls who grew up without care, either because their mothers were dead or because they had to work away from home all day so that their children grew up in the streets and never had any chance. Her heart had often ached over such girls. Sometimes they stole something—a trifle, usually, or they got into some other trouble the



police had to notice. Then they were sent to jail and shut up with hardened criminals; not taught anything useful or good, but shut up where there was nothing to learn but sin. And yet they were just children who had had no chance. Couldn't the fortunate colored women of the clubs do something to help these girls? Perhaps the thought of her own two protected daughters helped her to see the need of these unfortunate girls who were neglected.

So she and all the club women went to work.

"We must show Virginia that colored women can be useful as citizens," said the president; "that we can and will serve our state in a worthwhile way. We will take this poor human wreckage that is such a dead loss and waste and turn it into an asset for the state."

They worked three years, that handful of women, and they raised \$5,300. They bought a farm of a hundred and forty acres at Peake, eighteen miles from Richmond. Mrs. Barrett wrote Dr. Hart, head of the Child Welfare Department of the Russell Sage Foundation, for advice about plans for an industrial training school, and he gave her the best the Foundation had. The school was to be built on the cottage plan, that the girls might have the home life they had missed. The first cottage, built of concrete and brick, was for thirty girls and cost \$8,000.

The women wanted the state to help. It did

nothing now for delinquent colored girls, and they wanted an appropriation for the building. To get it, they knew they must have white people on their board of trustees. So Mrs. Barrett went to the civic-minded white woman who believed in "clean-up week." She was interested at once. Soon she had secured the white half of the board—herself, and two Richmond women distinguished in club and social life, the rector of General Lee's old church in Richmond, a prominent business man, and one or two others. Mrs. Barrett secured Negroes equally well-known among their people for her half of the board; and then the white and colored women went together to the legislature. The committee agreed to recommend an appropriation of \$3,000, and two white women promised \$2,000 more.

It was about this time that Mrs. Barrett's great sorrow came. Her husband died. For twenty-five years they had lived in understanding love. One can only state the loss and leave it.

Dr. Hart wrote her that when the house at Peake was built, she ought to take charge of it herself. "You had the vision," he said; "you must go there and make it come true."

She showed the letter to a white friend in some indignation. "I go to Peake!" she exclaimed; "and leave my lovely home and my friends and all my pretty things—to eat in an institution dining-room off thick plates with tin forks! Of

course I'm going to work for it harder than ever; but to live there!"

Her friend looked at her a minute and then said quietly, "Of course, if you don't feel you ought to go, that settles it."

Somehow she could not get away from these words. Then came a telegram from Richmond. The legislature, about to pass the appropriation, had received a protest from the white people of the Peake community; they didn't want the school there. "The legislature won't give the money in the face of this protest," telegraphed one of the white women trustees. "What shall I do?"

Mrs. Barrett answered, "Beg them to give us one chance—to try us. If the school proves objectionable, I promise to move it."

"That settled me," she said, laughing a little as she told the story. "I had promised to move it, and I wasn't going to move it, so it was up to me to make it succeed. I went there to live, and I've been there ever since."

"You must miss your home," it was suggested.

She looked sober for a minute and then laughed.

"Oh, well, I carried my silver spoons—and sometimes, on grand occasions, I use them. My two girls have been so sweet about it. And the other girls—did you notice when you went over the place any difference between the girls in the new cottage—the fifty-nine new-comers—and the honor girls in the first cottage?"

"I certainly did," was the reply. "The honor girls had a look—it was as though something inside of them had waked up."

"That's it," she cried. "That's it exactly! Their souls wake up. There is scarcely a girl there who isn't a Christian, and their lives and their work show it. We fail sometimes; but when our girls go out on parole they nearly all make good. Most of them go out to service—until they marry. They all know how to make a good home when they leave us. Some of them win scholarships in good schools and become teachers. Some of our old girls teach here now."

During the World War Mrs. Barrett had a surprise. One afternoon when she was out, a party of white people came from Washington, inspected everything on the place, and went off. Soon after, there came from the federal government an offer of \$20,000 to enlarge the place for work among the colored girls around the Virginia camps, if the state would give \$20,000 to match it. The state did, promptly, and two buildings were erected which were crowded all during the war.

The first cottage is the "honor cottage" to which the best girls are promoted with privileges after proving their trustworthiness. The girls in this honor cottage are those whose faces showed so plainly the spirit which had been kindled within them. In the white uniforms which they are allowed to wear on Sundays and special

occasions, they are a happy, promising looking group.

The third building is a big one, midway between the other two, and still little more than a shell. It was a crowded dormitory in war days, a real emergency building, where many a neglected girl obtained shelter and care and a start toward better things. It is used now for class-rooms, for entertainments, and for industries. Eventually it will be finished and equipped in a manner worthy of the great commonwealth to which it belongs. This faith which Virginia has in the work the school is doing was strikingly shown two or three years ago when the state legislature passed the following resolution:

*Whereas*, it has come to the knowledge of the General Assembly that most valuable and important services have been rendered by the colored women of the State of Virginia, known and organized as the "Virginia State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs," and

*Whereas*, this organization originated, raised funds for, and established an institution for the reform of wayward colored girls in the establishment of the Industrial Home School at Peake, Hanover County, Virginia, which has met with signal success and performed services of reform and conservation at this vital time, when all the services of all the people are so sorely needed,

*Therefore, be it resolved*, by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, that the services and sacrifices on the part of these citizens be recognized, and that this resolution express our appreciation of this work looking to the betterment of the morals of the State of Virginia.

Certainly Mrs. Barrett has made good. Of the white neighbors who feared to have such an insti-

tution come among them, not one can be found to-day who is not a warm friend of the school. In the state, appreciation of the work has so grown that support of it, at first entirely borne by the colored women, and then shared by them and the state, has been entirely taken over by the state.

But that isn't the whole story. Loving-kindness is a very contagious thing. Down in South Carolina the State Commissioner of Charities and Correction heard of Peake, and so did the colored women's clubs. They decided that the colored women should begin a similar work in their state, the Commissioner to help them in every way he could. Accordingly, the South Carolina colored women started a school. They have run it now for two years, and they have done so well with it that if it had not been for the after-the-war money troubles of the country and the farmers' losses in cotton, the state would probably have taken it over before this. But even though that step must wait, the white people are helping in other ways.

So good work spreads. As time goes on, there will be more schools and fewer prisons everywhere because people will see more and more clearly that the just and sensible thing to do is to take care of the children who have had no chance, and more people will understand the responsibility their own opportunities have placed upon them.

## VII

### A BUILDER OF PROSPERITY

**I**N Nottoway County, Virginia, in a little country village lives John Pierce, a man who serves his country in eight states. He is a Negro, and his service is primarily to his own people; yet it is of scarcely less importance to white people than to his own race.

The reasons for this fact are plain. All merchants are helped when ill-housed, poorly-clad, underfed people become able to buy lumber and plumbing and electric lights and screens and rugs and furniture, to build and furnish comfortable homes. The grocers and butchers and dry-goods men make more money when those who have been poor become able to buy plenty of good food and comfortable clothes. They will soon want farm machinery, too, and automobiles and fertilizers and books and musical instruments and life and fire insurance—everything, in fact, that anybody in America makes a living by selling.

People who are prospering also have money to put in banks. If the government needs to borrow money, these people can lend it. The Negroes in the South were once an almost beggared folk, but during the World War, a single business com-

pany of Negroes, the Mutual Life Insurance Company of Durham, North Carolina, bought \$300,000 worth of Liberty Bonds, a Negro in Louisiana bought \$100,000 worth, a Negro farmer near Tuskegee, Alabama, who has made every cent of his money out of his land, gave his check for \$20,000 worth of bonds at one time, and the Negroes altogether put \$225,000,000 into Liberty Bonds and War Savings Stamps, besides giving great sums to the Red Cross. Was it not better for our government and our cause and for every kind of business in America, that these people were no longer the penniless slaves they had been sixty years before?

John Pierce was born in Greensboro, Alabama. His father, a devout Christian, was a brick-layer and a hard worker. His mother was a hard worker, too, and a Christian whose daily living impressed all who knew her. But despite hard work, the family was very poor. Not only were wages low, but there were ten children to feed and clothe, all healthy and hungry and as busy as only children can be in wearing out and outgrowing their clothes. It was a hard test, such poverty as theirs, yet they met it cheerfully and with much love for one another.

Their main trouble lay in how to get an education. In those days few colored people were prepared to teach, and in the long years of poverty in the South after the Civil War, there was



very little money for schools for either white or black people. The colored schools would have been even poorer than they were, had the Negroes themselves not made sacrifices, sometimes little less than heroic, to eke out the school-money given by the county. John's mother, hard as she struggled, took the teacher to board at half what she was asked for board anywhere else, because she felt that the mere presence of a better-educated woman in the home would help her children to better ways of speech and a better outlook on life.

As soon as he was old enough, John followed the family tradition and went to work. By the time he was ten, he was helping his father lay bricks. Of course he had done other things before then. He had been "totin' chips" from the woodpile to the kitchen ever since he could walk, and "chopping cotton" in the little family patch, and picking it, too, from the time he was five or six. From the white folks' house to his mother's tubs and big iron pot in the back yard, he could carry on his head an amazing bundle of "wash-in'" all tied up in a sheet; and he could take it back again, snowy white, still on his head, but folded carefully in a big basket of "splits." John didn't mind the load, for he was proud to be trusted and to help.

Even when he was a little chap, he had friends among the white people and earned many a welcome nickel by running errands. His mother



*Photo by Chenye's Studio, Hampton, Va.*

**JOHN B. PIERCE**



taught her children to be honest and to work honestly, and for this reason people trusted them. They were thrifty, too. When they would earn a nickel or a dime, their mother taught them to save it. As a result, when John Pierce went to Tuskegee, he had money saved, and it helped him to get a start.

The same ambition that led his mother to take the school-teacher to board, was largely responsible for John's going to Tuskegee. Booker Washington came to Greensboro once when John was just a boy. His mother had heard something about the man who was helping so many Negro boys and girls, and she had him come and stay at her house that she might find out more about means of securing an education for her children. Mr. Washington told her all about Tuskegee, how boys and girls could work their way there even if they had no money. That settled things. John went to Tuskegee, and so did his sister and several of his brothers. The first year he was at school, his father died. He wanted to go home at once and take charge of things, but his mother would not hear of it. She told him to stay where he was and to make the most of his opportunity, that that was the best way to help her, and that she and the younger children would manage alone.

When John graduated, Mr. Washington recommended him as a teacher of brick-laying and other

work at the Quaker school at High Point, North Carolina, where he taught for two years. One day he found on the ground some clay that would make brick. He and his pupils dug it out, used the excavation for a cellar, made the bricks, and built a dormitory with student labor.

At that time—it was while Cleveland was president—there was great business depression in the country. It was a very hard time for the Negroes. Grown men worked all day for fifty cents or even less; tenants could not make anything out of their cotton. They lived the year round on corn-pone and bacon, and the farmers they worked for had to advance them that. The cotton hardly paid in the fall for their poor food. They were sunk in a hopeless grind of drudgery, with not one comfort in life. John Pierce was greatly troubled. He knew there was a better way; he had seen it at Tuskegee. All those tenants could have raised vegetables for the year round if they had only known how, and they could have had chickens and ducks and eggs and could have lived well. And if they would learn how to do better farming, they could raise bigger crops and have enough even to sell some. Gradually they could live in real homes instead of huts, and they could educate their children and have money in the bank. He wanted to show them how.

But he knew he had to learn more himself before he could teach others. He had seen the farm-

ing at Tuskegee and knew what could be done; but he had not learned farming, his work having been in the trades. He had to know about analyzing the soil and building it up and rotating crops and a lot of things an agriculturist should know.

He took what money he had saved and went to Hampton. He partly worked his way there and worked in summer on the school farm. For three years he studied and finished all the post-graduate work in agriculture. Part of the time he was assistant instructor in the Whittier School gardens at Hampton, and after he graduated, he was instructor in the normal agricultural work, both in class and in the gardens for three years more. The head of the State Relations Service in Washington said his work was the best in school gardens in the United States.

In the spring of 1906 Mr. Pierce began to do the work he had been looking forward to. He went out from Hampton on extension work to near-by places—school gardens and farm demonstrations. The government had no farm demonstration work among Negroes then, but in the fall the General Education Board offered to pay the salaries of some Negro demonstration agents if the Department would select the men and take charge of their work. Mr. Pierce was made county agent and later state agent for colored work.

When he goes to a meeting which the county

agent has worked up, the district agent goes with him, and they have meetings for one or two or three days. They talk over the school situation and make plans to better it. They spray fruit trees and potatoes, make the proper kind of sweet-potato beds, test seeds and soils, and plant cotton and corn and tobacco in demonstration fields, explaining everything as they go. They test cattle for tuberculosis and immunize hogs from cholera. The farmers learn much better if they see the things actually done as well as hear that they should be done. They pull down a poor poultry house or an insanitary toilet and build it back again right. They show the people how to screen their houses, how to keep their water-supply pure, how to grow and store vegetables, how to grow flowers and make things attractive. They do not do all these things every time at every place, but as many as they can each time. Sometimes the people come from adjoining counties, and they all bring their problems and ask questions. The wives and children come too—especially the boys. Pig and corn clubs are started, in which the boys and girls make their own money and save it for schooling or to buy a little land. Often at these demonstrations the boys put on a ball game in the afternoon, and the girls of the canning clubs put on contests and games.

In telling of these things, Mr. Pierce said: "Yesterday I was over in a county where we've

put on a special poultry campaign. We had about a hundred people—men, women, and children. We pulled down and reconstructed a chicken house, freed it of mites and the hens of lice, taught how to breed for better stock, how to feed for eggs, and how to keep eggs for winter. When the meeting was over, the women made lemonade, the boys and girls put on games, and we all had a social time. There'll be a new poultry record in that county after this, better fare on the tables, and more money for little comforts and conveniences in the homes."

When America entered the War, and it was vital to speed up food production, Mr. Pierce was put in charge of the colored work in eight states—Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, West Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Arkansas. The extension work the Government had been doing for ten or twelve years was largely responsible for the intelligence, loyalty, and efficiency with which the Negroes responded to the country's call. It was largely responsible, too, for the good relations existing between the races. The white people see how much better it is in every way and for every one for the colored people to prosper, and they aid the work wherever it is established. In speaking of his work, Mr. Pierce said, "I am just back from a meeting in Henderson, Tennessee, promoted by the cashier of the white bank. We had five hundred people out, a number of them white.



We often have white people, especially the county superintendent of education, and people of both races talk. It cultivates a friendly feeling; and the white people take an interest. Over in Henderson they're planning new buildings for our schools. Out in Arkansas, in Elaine, where the riots were, white people are employing colored farm demonstration agents. There was a meeting in Little Rock, too, and the governor and the secretary of state recognized the need of better state colleges of agriculture. They said the Negroes could count on having better provision made for them."

The record of crop yields is an interesting commentary on John Pierce's life-work. Fifteen years ago the average yield of corn in Virginia was fifteen bushels per acre. Now it is forty bushels, and in the last five years men have often raised as high as seventy-five bushels per acre. Cooperation is growing, too. The white farmers are forming associations to market their crops better, and they admit the colored farmers on exactly the same terms as the white. That means more money for all the people and more friendliness, too. In Charlotte County the county association has put a colored farmer on the executive committee. The interracial committees also cooperate with the farmers.

The story of Wellville and Nottoway County, John Pierce's home territory, is another example

of this man's ability and helpfulness to his country. Wellville is just a village, with Blackstone the nearest town. When Mr. Pierce went there in 1908 the schoolhouses were one-roomed log cabins; school ran five months; there were only "emergency" teachers in the whole county—those who have not even the lowest certificate. They each received twenty-five dollars a month the five months they taught.

The colored people bought some land and deeded it to the school board. The white people gave lumber, and the Negroes gave labor. They built a good one-roomed school, painted it, and fitted it out with patent desks. Such a school is now in every colored community in the county, with teachers holding first or second grade certificates. They run seven months of the year, and the teachers get fifty dollars a month.

Agricultural teaching and farm demonstration work have gone on all over the county. Corn production has risen from fifteen to seventy-five bushels an acre, and other crops have increased in the same way. The people put in "cover crops" to build up and preserve the soil; and they have vegetables the year round.

The houses used to be built of logs. Over seventy-five per cent of them have been rebuilt or remodeled, and painted or whitewashed. They all have sanitary outbuildings. Musical instruments are now in the homes, the people have better

clothes, and they have money in the bank. The church at Wellville was poor and there was no way to baptize the people in it. It was remodeled, a baptistery was put in, and church finances were put on a business basis. The church is now used as a community center. At first the pastors of country churches thought it was not religious to use a church to talk about community health or to give community pleasure; but all that has changed in Nottoway—and in many other counties, also.

Mr. Pierce's extension work was the beginning of the County Training School at Blackstone. "We can't claim credit for all of it," he said, when asked about it. "We had co-operation from colored and white people too." The colored people raised a certain amount, and the county board promised so much more. The colored people agreed to employ at least five teachers, to have eight grades and an eight months' school, to have instruction in agriculture and home industries, and an elementary course in the art of teaching. As soon as possible, they were to add at least two years of high school work. That is the standard for a county training school; and where it is met, the Slater Fund and the General Education Board both cooperate with the county board and bear part of the expense. There is a fine school at Blackstone now, with seven or eight teachers, and they will never lack for good teach-

ers in the county again. There are dormitories for those who live too far away to go back and forth, and land for school gardens and for pig and poultry and farm demonstration work.

By this time Dr. Knapp, of the Department of Agriculture at Washington, thought Mr. Pierce had done enough for the people in Virginia and wanted to get him down in the Gulf States. But the white people rose up and refused to let him go.

"The white people are good friends to us here in Virginia," said Mr. Pierce. "It is good for the colored people to feel safe. In Blackstone a colored man committed a horrible crime. The city officials feared a lynching and telegraphed the governor for troops, but the leading white men of the town got together, telegraphed the governor their pledge that the man should have a fair trial and asked him to let them guard Blackstone's good name. No troops were sent, and those white men guarded the jail and the courtroom until the trial was over and the prisoner lawfully executed. It made the colored people feel they could get justice there and a fair trial. They are buying homes and putting their money in the banks.

"My own boys are getting a start already. They go seven miles and back every day to school at Blackstone. In addition they each cultivate a piece of land and bank their money. This summer they cut fifteen tons of hay from their land and sold it for thirty dollars a ton."

Looking at the quiet, kindly face, peaceful with years of service, despite the many outward struggles, one wondered if there have been any very sharp inward struggles—temptations and difficulties that threatened to wreck his life.

“Why, of course,” he said slowly in response to such a question. “Every one has temptations enough to prove his mettle. There have been those who would exploit the farmers, one way or another, and I could have made a good deal of money if I had agreed to help them in their schemes. But I—things like that never really mattered. You see, for all our family our mother has been—well, just a clear light before us. It was always so, and even the white people knew it. When I was a little fellow at Greensboro, another colored boy set on me one day in the street. I fought him off the best I could—he was bigger than I—and a policeman came along and took us both up to the city court. The judge sent the other boy to jail and told me to run along home. He said he knew my mother, and he knew how she raised her children. She was just like that.”

“Did she live long enough to know anything about this work you are doing now?” he was asked.

His whole face lighted up. “Why, she’s living now, down in Greensboro! I see her every now and then. All her children want her to live with them—we can all take good care of her; but she

likes to stay on in the old home. So we all take care of her there and see her when we can. She knows all about my work."

Thinking of one's own home and of those in it who have grown to manhood and womanhood, one knows that the highest honor which can come to any woman is that she should be "a clear light before" her children. Ignorant, this poor woman may have been, struggling on in grinding poverty through years of hardest work, but measured by God's standards, which are the only real ones, this colored mother had attained.

## VIII

### A WOMAN BANKER

**O**N a corner just a block from Broad Street, in Richmond, Virginia, stands a handsome three-story building of brick and stone which bears a tablet with the legend, "St. Luke's Penny Savings Bank. Established 1902." This is said to be the first bank in the country founded by a woman, and it is still one of the very few that have a woman president—the only bank founded or run by a colored woman.

St. Luke's Bank started with \$25,000 of paid-up capital. This was afterwards increased to \$50,000; and it has a surplus of \$25,000 more. It has paid its stockholders a five per cent dividend steadily, regardless of panics and hard times; and once, during a severe money stringency, when the white banks of Richmond were unable to extend further loans to the city, this colored woman banker lent the city \$100,000 in cash to carry on the public schools for both the white and black races.

How did the daughter of a colored laundress and one-time slave come to start a bank and guide it to success through twenty-one years filled with other important work? Something went before it,

of course; not merely unusual ability, which she plainly has, but long, hard, faithful work in helping the poorer members of her race to win through in times of adversity and to get on their feet.

Mrs. Maggie L. Walker was born in Richmond. Her mother was Elizabeth Mitchell—a woman born a slave and unable to make a living for herself and her little girl except at the washtub. But what she could do, she did well, and her own lack of opportunity fixed in her the determination that her child should have a chance. What this determination cost the mother in toil and sacrifice one may not know,—washing was not a lucrative profession in those days in the South. But mother and daughter took their hardships cheerfully, and the girl did her best to lighten her mother's load so far as she could. When she was eighteen, she graduated from high school, and that fall became a teacher in one of the public schools. From that time to the present, one of her main purposes in life has been to make life easier for the mother to whose sacrifices she owes her first start toward better things.

Mrs. Walker was married when she was twenty and went into the business of home-making with the same joyful and energetic efficiency which had marked her work as a teacher. Her husband, a skilled workman, prospered, and with his wife's good management, they and their two little sons lived in comfort and began to prosper.



As the boys grew older and went to school, the mother found herself growing restless. She was well and strong, her home work was thoroughly organized and went like clock-work, her husband and the boys were away most of the day, and although her church work had grown considerably, she still had time on her hands for more work. "I felt like a spendthrift," she said, in speaking of this time. "I knew I had the energy to do a lot of things for my people that needed doing, and I felt I ought to be about it some way. Yet I didn't know what I could do or where to begin. I was restless and wanted work that was of some account."

Then her opportunity came—such a tiny one, apparently, that one could hardly have blamed her, had she refused it. But she had made it the rule of her life to do what she could with whatever came to her hand. That was one of the valuable lessons she learned from her mother, the laundress.

There was a little benefit society in Richmond—one of probably a dozen or two such. They are pathetically popular among Negroes, to whom sickness is a catastrophe such as only the poorest people can fully comprehend. This particular society was the Independent Order of St. Luke. It collected small weekly dues from its members, of whom at that time it had a thousand. If they fell ill, it paid them a certain sum weekly. If they

died, a death benefit was paid which provided for the funeral expenses, thus saving the family from what is often, among the very poor, a crushing burden of debt.

Mrs. Walker was offered the secretaryship of this society at the munificent salary of eight dollars a month. She was to collect dues, verify cases of illness and of death, keep the books, and pay out all sums due.

She accepted the opportunity at once. The Order might be a small one—for an Order, but looking after a thousand members did seem a job to keep one busy, and it certainly helped the people it reached. As soon as she had the work at her fingers' ends, however, she began reaching out. If the Order helped a thousand, why shouldn't it help twenty thousand—fifty—a hundred thousand? Why should it confine itself to giving help in trouble? Why couldn't it train people to help themselves in time of health to save, to invest, to win their way to economic independence? Why couldn't it get hold of the children and teach them thrift, build up self-control and forethought in their careless little souls, and start them on the path to success before they should form habits of self-indulgence and waste? Why, it could do all that! And it should, and it would. So it has done and still does to-day.

There are now a hundred thousand members of the Order in twenty-one states, seventy-five

thousand of whom have held their membership long enough to be entitled to benefits if they become ill or die. Five dollars a week is paid in case of sickness; and from one hundred to five hundred dollars, according to the amount of dues paid, in case of death. There is over \$70,000 cash in the emergency fund—a fund that didn't exist when Mrs. Walker took charge. A hundred and forty field workers are employed, and forty-five clerks are in the home office. The assets of the Order amount to \$360,000. A handsome office building has been put up at 900-904 St. James Street, Richmond, costing \$100,000. It provides ample office space for the work of the Order, a large auditorium, a number of rooms for club and lodge meetings, a large supply department where the badges, regalia, account books, and so forth, of the Order are manufactured and sent out, and a complete printing establishment with two linotype machines. Here the *St. Luke's Herald*, another of Mrs. Walker's enterprises, is printed and goes out to its big constituency. It gives full reports of the Order's business, stories of members, both children and adults, who are getting ahead financially or doing anything else worth while, suggestions for meetings, and sound teaching in regard to health, thrift, morals, and education. It goes to city and country, to educated and ignorant. To scores of thousands of unprivileged Negroes it is giving inspiration and a horizon.



OFFICE FORCE OF THE INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ST. LUKE,  
OF WHICH MRS. WALKER IS THE HEAD



It was because of all this rapidly extending work that Mrs. Walker felt the need of a bank. In 1902 she started one and built a home for it a few blocks away from the headquarters building. In 1920 this bank had nearly six thousand depositors and resources of over half a million dollars.

This does not, however, nearly represent the thrift work of St. Luke's. Over fifteen thousand children who are members, scattered through many states, meet weekly with a regular program which includes Bible instruction and lessons in thrift and in hygiene. Each child is given a card-board "rainy-day bank"; as soon as he has a dollar, the leader encourages him to put it in a regular savings bank just as is done with adult members. These savings, for the most part, find their way to local white banks, the Richmond institution serving only adjacent territory.

"When any of our girls is advanced to making as much as fifty dollars a month," said Mrs. Walker, "we begin to persuade them to buy a home. As soon as they save enough for the first payment, the bank will help them out. There is a woman in the office here who came to us eighteen years ago. She did odd jobs of cleaning, and we paid her a dollar a week, which she was glad to get. But we encouraged her to fit herself for better things. She studied, took a business course at night-school, and has worked her way up until now she is our head bookkeeper, with a salary of

one hundred and fifty dollars a month. She owns a nice home, well furnished and fully paid for, and has money in the bank.

“Then there was that one-legged little bootblack at Second and Clay streets. He joined our Order. He had a rented chair out on the sidewalk in the weather. We helped him save, and when he had fifty dollars, we helped him rent a little place with three chairs. That was seven years ago. Now he has a place of his own with twelve chairs. He has bought a home for his mother—paid \$1,900 for it—and has it furnished and free of debt. And his bank account never falls below five hundred dollars.

“Numbers of our children have bank accounts of from one hundred to four hundred dollars. They sell papers, cut grass, do chores, run errands, work in stores Saturdays. We teach them to save with the definite purpose of wise use of the money. We try to give them a sense of moral responsibility for its wise use. Of course we can't do that without religious teaching. We teach them the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments, the words of Christ, and some of the Psalms. We try to connect these things with every-day living and to show them that part of their duty in becoming independent is getting where they can help others.

“We do a good deal of the same kind of work with the grown people. Our bank lends money

for home-building at six per cent, and we tide the deserving ones over times of trouble. Six hundred and forty-five homes have been entirely paid for through our bank's help."

All this really does look like work enough for one woman, with the travel it involves through nearly half the states of the Union, the constant speaking, writing, and oversight of so many activities.

Besides these business interests there is Mrs. Walker's church work, which includes her local church and Sunday-school, and her position as one of the trustees of the Woman's Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention.

But Mrs. Walker's social service work is enough for a story in itself. Through her club affiliations, she became deeply interested in Mrs. Barrett's school at Peake. She organized in Richmond a Council of Women with fourteen hundred members, which did yeoman service in raising the first five thousand dollars to buy the farm at Peake and has ever since given liberally to all the needs of the school. Mrs. Walker is one of the colored members of the school's bi-racial board of trust. As a result of this work for Peake came the community work in Richmond.

"The white women of Richmond began it," she said. "You know what some of them have done here—women who stand at the top socially and who are leaders in the church and the club life of



the city and state. They had done fine community work for white people, and at length they went to our preachers and asked them to invite their leading women to a conference. As a result, we began some forms of community work. Then a white philanthropist who gave the white women a house for a working girls' home said that if we colored women would show our interest in social work among our people by raising a thousand dollars for it, he would give us the use of a large house, and if we made good, he would deed it to a board of white and colored women for colored work.

"You know we had to make good after that. We raised the thousand dollars, and we have kept right on. The house has been deeded now to our bi-racial board. The white women don't work for us,—they work with us; and they've helped us to connect up with every charitable organization in the city. We have four paid workers, and the Community House is just such a center of influence as we have needed all these years."

Of Mrs. Walker's interest in this work, her grasp of the problems it touches, and her willingness to spend and be spent in it, the white women of the joint board speak with high praise. Here, as at Peake, and as a trustee of Miss Burroughs' school at Washington, she shows her concern especially for the young womanhood of her race.

When Mrs. Walker, who is a literal believer in

the injunction to keep one hand in ignorance of what the other does, told Miss Burroughs that she ought not to have put her name over the building she gave to the National Training School, Miss Burroughs replied,

“You ought not to feel that way. It helps those girls there struggling for an education to know that a successful woman like you cares about them; and the thought of your success is an inspiration to them to try harder to succeed, themselves. And better than all, it’s an object-lesson to teach them that the finest use of success is to serve others.”

When asked about the new laundry at the Washington school and the ten thousand dollars Miss Burroughs so urgently needed for it soon, the banker trustee said placidly:

“She’ll get it. She always does. Nannie Burroughs sits down there in her office when she wants some money and writes off a letter. Then she mimeographs it and sends it to our people all over the country. If you read the first line, you finish it; and by the time you finish it, your money is as good as out of your pocket into hers. There’s nothing to do but to send her what she asks for. Don’t you worry about that laundry; it’s all right, and she is too.”

One can but be impressed with the way Mrs. Walker, Mrs. Barrett, and Mrs. Burroughs work together. Their personalities are markedly differ-

ent, their gifts differ, their calls to service lead them along divergent lines. Yet each is among the most notable present-day women of their race; and their friendship and cooperation, their hearty faith in one another's work, the absence of petty self-consciousness and the rivalry which springs from it are beautiful to see.

Mrs. Walker's two sons, grown men now, are closely associated with her in her business. They talk things over together; and sometimes, when a decision in some matter is hard to come by, the boys discuss it between themselves. Such talks are liable to end with:

"Has Mother been praying over this thing?"

"Why, of course she has."

"Well, there's no need to worry then. I notice when Mother prays things do straighten out."

That is really the secret of all these women's power. They are all women of unusual endowment; but they are also women of faith and prayer.

## IX

### "A COMPOSER BY DIVINE RIGHT"

**I**F Harry Burleigh's musical gift had been less genuine, it might have been smothered out by the difficulties of his life, for this composer-to-be was born and reared in deep poverty, with the added handicap of Negro blood.

In that blood, however, there was a strain of courage and determination the boy might well be proud of. His grandfather, Hamilton Waters, was an escaped slave who became blind as a result of the hardships which he endured. Yet blind, he worked on down to a ripe old age, supporting himself and aiding as far as he could his children.

His daughter Elizabeth, Harry's mother, was born near Lansing, Mich., in a wagon in which her parents were trying to make their way into Canada. Perhaps it was her baby needs which changed their plans for they did not cross the border, but turned aside and settled in Erie, Pennsylvania. Here the blind father set himself to provide for his family.

Whether through independence or through friendlessness—perhaps through both—the father set up in business for himself as a presser of men's clothing. For this, he needed only an iron

and a board and the wise touch of fingers which serve the blind for eyes. He brought character to his work and the will to succeed.

For many years Harry's grandfather was also the town crier, a position not to be obtained nowadays when an extra paper is printed at any hour of the day that anything unusual happens. In those days, newspapers, even the biggest of them, were printed but once a day, and those issued in small places, but once a week. If anybody died, the town crier went through the streets ringing his bell and telling the hour of the funeral. If an important meeting was to be held, he told that. He carried the news of any outside happening that was of importance to the community or to the world at large. But it was hard work tramping the streets in all weathers, and did not bring in very much money. Yet by the time the baby born in the wagon had grown up and finished high school, her father was able, by what sharp self-denial one can guess, to send her to college. She graduated, only to find that no place was open to her to do the work for which she had fitted herself. The Civil War was not yet over, and neither North nor South had any place for educated colored people. She married later and had five children. One, born in 1866, was christened Henry Thacker and grew up to become known as Harry T. Burleigh, singer and composer.

While he was still a little fellow, Harry's father

died, and his mother had to go out from her home to win bread for her children. She took the only kind of work open to her and became janitress of a public school. It was poorly paid work, and it was all she and her father could do to keep the wolf from the door. As soon as they could, the children worked too. From the time he was big enough to do anything at all, Harry sold papers and ran errands and did any odd chores he could find to do. Later he was employed as a lamp-lighter. Boys and girls of to-day are used to the flashing on of electricity in a moment, but not so very many years ago oil lamps lighted the smaller cities, and even New York and London were lighted at night by dim gaslights. As each lamp had to be lighted by hand, quite an army of boys and men found employment in lighting them at dusk and turning them out at dawn.

During these years, the boy was going to public school. Children, then as now, were taught singing in school, and here it was discovered that Harry had quite a wonderful voice. His teachers took great pains with him. The gift which God had given him began to grow and blossom until a passionate love for music filled his soul.

His mother, like her son, was eager to do any extra work which would bring more money to the family purse; and being both intelligent and highly trained, she was in demand to help in serving at large entertainments in the homes of

wealthy people of Erie. In this capacity she was frequently employed by a lady who brought to her home for the entertainment of her friends many distinguished musical artists. Harry's mother would tell the boy when a recital was to be given, and he would stand outside, often in bitter cold weather, in the hope of hearing some of the masters of the art he so loved. One day his mother told him that the great Joseffy was coming. That night he stood outside the windows of Mrs. Russell's home, the snow up to his knees, drinking in the great artist's magic. He barely escaped pneumonia as a result of this experience. To prevent the repetition of such an illness, his mother told her employer the story; and after that, when Mrs. Russell gave a concert for her friends, Harry was inside, opening the door to guests.

Mme. Carreño was one of the artists whom he heard in this way, and with her at Mrs. Russell's home was Mrs. MacDowell, the mother of the American composer. Harry saw and remembered Mrs. MacDowell, and years afterward she played an important part in his life.

Through his school singing the boy's voice became known to a number of people. From the time he was sixteen, he sang in church choirs in Erie on Sunday and in the Jewish synagogue on Saturday. He went to school until he was twenty, always working hard outside of school hours and in vacation. In summer, as he grew older, he

worked on the big lake steamers. But all the money he could earn was far from enough for what he wanted, and the desire of his heart seemed destined to remain a dream. He studied stenography and worked at that until he was twenty-six years old.

Then he heard that the National Conservatory of Music in New York City had, through its president, Mrs. Jeannette M. Thurber, offered some scholarships, and he decided to try for one of them. He came to New York and sang before a committee of judges, Joseffy himself being one. There was some question of his winning a scholarship, but when he sought out the registrar of the conservatory, he recognized her as Mrs. MacDowell and gave her a letter of recommendation which Mrs. Russell had written for him. She turned the scale in his favor and during his four years of study was his unfailing friend. She gave him clerical work in her office and helped him in every way she could.

Dvorák, greatest of Bohemian composers, was the director of the conservatory, the faculty of which was composed of famous men. Dvorák was interested in the eager student and gave him much of his time outside of class hours. Burleigh copied many of his orchestral compositions for him. He also played and sang for Dvorák the old Negro "spirituals." These weird and beautiful melodies made a deep impression on the great com-



poser, who wove one of them into one of his greatest compositions, the "New World Symphony."

Burleigh studied hard during these four years, developing his splendid voice and learning harmony and counterpoint under men who were real masters. But always there was the struggle for daily bread. His scholarship covered only his tuition. Odd jobs and chores were still necessities to supply food and clothes. His mother, firm in her belief in her boy's great gifts, found ways to help him out, as mothers will. What he could not have, he did without, and there was no complaint or self-pity. The first summer after he came to New York, he went to Saratoga and worked in a hotel; but by the next summer his voice was becoming known, and he went again to Saratoga for the vacation months, this time as baritone soloist in an Episcopal church. The worst was now behind him. Since that time, while he has worked hard, he has been doing work he loves and is fitted for. Later years have brought him the rewards of work well done. His early struggles and privations have left not the slightest touch of bitterness on his spirit. He went through them all and conquered them with that best of all courage which carries good cheer high, like a guidon.

In 1894, when the position of baritone soloist became vacant in St. George's Episcopal Church in New York, one of the largest churches in the

city, Mr. Burleigh applied for the position. He was the only Negro among the sixty applicants, but he had the voice wanted, and Dr. Rainsford, the rector, and the vestrymen did not think the color of his skin should rule him out of serving with it in God's house. For twenty-eight years he has remained a member of this choir. For twenty-two years he has sung also in Temple Emanu-El, one of the largest synagogues of the city.

Burleigh's voice became known far and wide, and work crowded in upon him. He undertook the training of choirs in a number of churches in New York and its vicinity, doing the work with such modest courtesy and yet with such ability and success that each effort added to his reputation. His voice was beautiful, rich, full, and musical to the last vibration, and it had been splendidly trained. He was soon in demand at concerts and at private musicales. Several European tours were arranged for him, and for years his annual vacations were spent abroad, where he sang in England and on the continent with great and increasing success. He sang for King Edward VII, who greatly admired his voice, and for many of the other crowned heads of Europe. But the real test of his ability was the power of his voice to move all kinds of people in the mixed audiences of great cities. Measured by that standard, he sang greatly.

It is as a singer that he classifies himself. "A composer?" he says, when his musical works are spoken of. "Oh, no. Just a few songs I've done, and practically no orchestration. My life has been spent as a singer—is spent that way now. I cannot lay claim to the name of composer."

But many musicians of rank disagree with him. He has composed the music for about a hundred songs and several festival anthems for choruses, and he has written the scores for a volume of Negro "spirituals" which are not the least of his achievements.

These old Negro melodies were sung, as all Southern people know, by groups of slaves and were without any instrumental accompaniment. So sung, by hundreds of voices, their beauty fills the heart and makes words difficult. One feels them, and in them the faith and aspiration of a race. They may be heard in perfection at Hampton, Tuskegee, and Fisk University, and at many of the Negro schools of the South. But except for the occasional tours of some small group of Negro singers in the North, until recently they were seldom heard outside the Southern states. Yet some of the world's leading musicians and composers agree that these melodies are America's most distinctive gift to the music of the world. For a long time Southern people thought lightly of this treasure. Many of them regarded Negro songs as a joke, and laughed

over them until the Negroes themselves grew half ashamed of their wonderful melodies and tried above everything to "sing like white folks."

But with time came a broader view of the unique place of Negro music in the world of art. Among white people, those who laughed were silenced by those whose hearts had always been moved by the weird and haunting melody of Negro songs. Before they dropped into oblivion, white and Negro scholars and musicians began to collect them and teach them to the rising generation. Mr. Burleigh's contribution to this movement, of such value to America and the world, has been the setting of the old melodies to a musical accompaniment so that they may be sung anywhere, by any singer, just as other songs are sung.

It was, owing to the very nature of the music, a most difficult thing to do, and perhaps no man not a Negro, however gifted, would have dared to attempt it. But Mr. Burleigh has done it supremely well. "Each composition," says a musical authority, "is a classic in itself." Their success is attested by the famous singers who to-day use Burleigh's settings of the "spirituals." Perhaps the most famous of this well-known group of songs is "Deep River"; but it is hard to select where all are of merit.

One of Burleigh's finest pieces of work, according to musical critics, is "Ethiopia Saluting the Colors," a setting of Walt Whitman's poem. An-

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other noted song is his setting of Rupert Brooke's sonnet, "The Soldier." "Jean" has been sung by thousands of people here and abroad, and also "The Young Warrior," a wonderful setting of the war song of a Negro poet, James Weldon Johnson. The words themselves are noble:

Mother, shed no mournful tears,  
But gird me on my sword;  
And give no utterance to thy fears,  
But bless me with thy word.

Now let thine eyes my way pursue  
Where'er my footsteps fare;  
And when they lead beyond thy view  
Send after me a prayer.

Still, pray not to defend from harm,  
Nor danger to dispel;  
But rather, that with steadfast arm  
I fight the battle well.

Pray that I keep, through all the days,  
My heart and purpose strong,  
My sword unsullied, and always  
Unsheathed against the wrong.

The lines are drawn, the fight is on,  
A cause is to be won;  
Mother, look not so white and wan:  
Give Godspeed to thy son.

The music stirs the blood. There is in it a very passion of patriotic fervor and sacrifice. That it was sung all over America and France by our Negro troops is no wonder. It swept Italy like a flame; the soldiers of the Italian army sang



*Photo by Mishkin, New York*

**HARRY T. BURLEIGH**



it on the battlefield, and their people sang it at home. Zandonai, a notable Italian composer, wrote an orchestration for it, that the song might pour from thousands of throats with the full power of the instruments behind it. One musical critic has said that it is "one of the few really admirable songs America has produced in recent years."

One of Mr. Burleigh's greatest successes has been his music for a song by Walter Brown, "Little Mother of Mine." John McCormack sang this with tremendous effect in the New York Hippodrome before "the largest audience ever seen in America's largest playhouse." A thousand people sat on the stage behind the singer for want of room in the house. At the close of the song the audience rose in an ovation, and McCormack insisted that Burleigh, who sat near him, should go forward with him to acknowledge the applause.

"You went, of course," he was asked.

He shook his head. "I couldn't. I couldn't. But he sang it wonderfully."

The songs are not all. There are "Southland Sketches," four compositions for the violin which have won high praise; and orchestrations for some of the songs arranged as choruses. The "Five Songs of Laurence Hope" are counted among his best work.

Harry Burleigh is still a singer with a voice which is a joy to hear. But he is a composer, too;



those who know his work agree with Kramer, who calls him "a composer by divine right." Concerning this, his publisher has also a word to say.

"He has done remarkable things," said he; "things which would have been remarkable in a man who began with everything in his favor and had no such fight to make as Burleigh had. But he has so much more in him. If only some one had had the vision, in Burleigh's youth, to set him free from that long struggle for mere existence and make it possible for him to spend his strength in the work he was made for, he would rank with MacDowell himself. One must have time for symphonies, months and years; and they bring in no ready money. America, and the whole world of art, is the poorer because Burleigh had to fight for his daily bread so long."

But Burleigh himself only smiles at this. "I had my living to make," he says. "I am like other people, I must do the best I can with what I have and not cry for what I can't get."

He is the musical editor for the American branch of the Ricordi house. No piece of music is submitted to them which does not pass through his hands and rest its fate on his judgment. But with all his success as a singer, composer, and judge of music, Harry Burleigh is as modest, as simple, as unspoiled as the boy who stood knee-deep in snow to catch a strain of the music he so loved.

## X

### A LIGHT IN A DARK PLACE

**M**ARTHA DRUMMER was born in a little Georgia town. Her people were very poor, and her father's death left the family an added burden of poverty. She had two sisters, and while they were still small, their mother moved to Griffin, a larger town, where there was a better school. For poor and ignorant though she was, this colored mother planned the best her love could compass for her girls, love and the spirit of sacrifice being God's common gifts to the mothers of all the world. She worked and pinched to keep her girls in the public school, and of course they helped by working in vacation, even when they were little.

Martha finished the sixth grade—no small achievement under the circumstances. Then, she “hired out,” as is said in the South, to white folks, and began at the age of twelve or thirteen to support herself.

But two things had happened to her: meager though it was, her schooling had awakened a bright mind, and she was athirst for an education; and her soul had wakened too, so that she wanted the education as a means of better service to God

and her fellows. It seemed like wanting the rainbow, but she wanted it, and the Lord knew how great her desire was.

There were schools in the South for just such girls as Martha. The Southern white people hardly realize yet what the schools for Negroes opened in the South by the Northern churches after the war have done for the development both of the Negroes and the South. There were bitter years in which both races lost their old trust in one another; and a time of such poverty that adequate schools for white children were impossible, and little was done for Negroes. If the Northern Christians had not stood in the breach, bringing opportunity to gifted Negroes and a chance to many more of fair ability, the race would have been leaderless during most critical times, a prey to every evil influence. What would be the relations of the races to-day without the lives and influence of men like Booker Washington, Dr. Moton, Isaac Fisher, George Haynes, Bishop Clinton, John Hope, Bishop Jones, Archdeacon Russell, John Gandy, and scores and scores more—ministers, teachers, doctors, business men, who have taught their people higher ways of living for mind and body and soul!

The South is spending thousands of dollars now where it scarcely spent hundreds in the lean years for Negro education. But for many years there were no Negro teachers worthy the name except

those trained by the Northern churches. They sent out such women as Miss Lucy Laney, Miss Georgia Washington, Mrs. Julia Harris, Mrs. Charlotte Brown, Mrs. Washington—one is perplexed about naming any of so great a company because of the many who must be omitted. All over the South these women have built character and industry and Christian service, a blessing to white and black alike.

There was a school, therefore, for Martha Drummer. Dr. Thirkield, who is now Bishop Thirkield, was at that time in charge of the theological department of Clark University. At one time when he visited Griffin to preach to the Negroes, Martha's pastor told him about her. Dr. Thirkield went to see her and was impressed, as the pastor had been, by her unusual promise. Maybe the twinkle in her eyes helped, for, as good judges of human nature know, a keen sense of kindly fun and humor is a pretty good indication of brains and force, and Martha's eyes have twinkled all her life. Dr. Thirkield secured a tuition scholarship for her, and she went to Atlanta to enter the preparatory school at Clark.

The first year, she worked for a family who gave her time during school hours to attend her classes; but she needed more time for study. She so clearly showed her worth that the second year a way was made for her to live at the girls' dormitory. She worked on Saturdays and taught

school in vacation. By hard economy, she eventually graduated from Clark.

One of her teachers relates that when she first entered the dormitory, she would cause outbreaks of laughter during study hour by her comical "asides" on the lessons. But her teacher soon found that what she said was not only funny, but that it set the girls to thinking, so that she always had better lessons from them the days after Martha had bubbled over.

Her sense of humor sometimes helped her to shrewd decisions in a tight place. One summer she had in her vacation school seven or eight children from one family. In those days the county schools had very short terms, which the colored parents lengthened by paying the teacher themselves by the week or month after the public term was over. When Martha called on the mother of this numerous brood for her first payment, she was told that in that family school bills were always paid in a lump at the end of the term, and knowing the woman to be prosperous, well able to pay the money all at once, she waited. But at the end of the term she was calmly told that her patron had no money at all and could not pay a cent. Martha knew this was not true. She also knew that she had earned her money, and that she had to have it. So she borrowed a horse and wagon and a rope and drove out to the woman's home. Her eyes must have danced on

the way, though she looked as solemn as possible when she arrived. The woman was more than solemn, she "was plumb worried to death," she said, "but she didn't have nary a cent to pay—not one."

"Never mind," said Martha kindly, "some of your farm products will do. I would just as soon have a couple of pigs. I'm sure I can sell them, and don't you worry another minute."

The pigs were all over the yard, so the woman could not possibly say she didn't have "nary a pig." Martha caught two, got them into the wagon and tied them, the woman looking on, petrified. Martha bade her a cheerful good-evening and started off; but before she got to the big road, the woman came to life. She couldn't lose all that bacon and sausage, to say nothing of hams and "chitlin's"! She found a purse or an old stocking in no time and ran after the teacher hot-foot. They had a pleasant chat down by the gate. The pigs went home with their mistress, while Martha went home, her eyes dancing more than ever, with her hard-earned money in her pocket.

She wanted to be a foreign missionary. There was need at home, she knew, but out in Africa were millions who had never heard of a God of love; millions who knew no comfort of body or mind or soul. Whoever helped them must give up home and friends and comfort. When one really sees the need, things which to most people

seem essential do not matter; and Martha Drummer saw.

She took the two years' deaconess course at the Methodist women's training school in Boston, and then the three years' course for a nurse. In February, 1906, she was ready to go. She was sent to Quessua, Angola, West Africa, where there was only one colored missionary in the province—Miss Susan Collins, at the Quessua orphanage and to her village and school Miss Drummer was assigned.

Being a missionary in Africa is a pretty sharp test of one's desire to serve, and Quessua is no exception to this rule. It is in Angola, down on the West Coast, in the temperate zone, 3,500 feet above sea-level. If the swamps could be drained, it would be a pleasant country. The village takes its name from a little stream which springs from the foot of Mount Bango near by. Several native villages are close around, but the nearest post-office and telegraph and railroad stations are at Melange, six miles away. When Miss Drummer first went out, the railroad stopped eighty-five miles away, and that distance had to be traveled in a hammock slung on poles carried by native bearers. This seemed to Miss Drummer a selfish way of traveling, so she tried to walk; but she found it a dangerous thing for one unaccustomed to the climate to attempt. She couldn't afford to waste the years and the money her preparation

had cost by killing herself with dengue fever as soon as she reached Africa. The porters, trained for generations in such work, and quite at home in the African sun, had no trouble at all in carrying her.

At length she was set down in the Quessua orphanage of the Methodist Women's Foreign Mission Society. It was a low, small, crowded building, with none of the conveniences or comforts to which she had grown accustomed in her years of training; but neither she nor Miss Collins, her fellow-worker, ever mentioned these facts. They were working among savage folk, all of whom lived in poverty and need. Even to-day many of the villagers have no clothing except the skins of wild animals; and many more wear loin cloths or a few yards of cheap cotton wound about their bodies. Those who manage to get something more like our clothes are without any of the comforts of life, as we think of comforts. Miss Collins and Miss Drummer hated to have so much more than the poor people they had come there to help, so they never told of the discomforts. It was not until one of the white women sent out by the Board went there and wrote back about what these colored women were putting up with that any one at home knew. A comfortable two-story home, with plenty of room, was then built for them, and they could not help enjoying it.

But though their home is at the foot of the



mountain in this high country and commands a beautiful view, it is neither as healthful nor as comfortable as it would be in a different climate. The heavy African rains pour down for months until the land is saturated with water, and every valley and little hollow become a marsh. Here insect pests breed by millions, carrying not only grave discomfort, but disease and even death. So heavy are the rains that it takes nearly the whole of the dry season for the swamps to disappear. Then the rains come again, and the marshes begin once more to form.

Not long after Miss Drummer reached Quessua an epidemic of fever broke out. She herself nursed thirty-eight cases, bringing thirty-seven back to health. The suffering from disease, so much of it preventable, and from the ignorance which makes sickness even more dangerous, she still finds among the hardest things to bear. In her trips through the heathen villages, she takes as many simple remedies as she can, never knowing what she may have to face. On a recent trip she heard a baby screaming with pain. The child was ill, and the mother had sent for the witch-doctor, the only doctor she had ever known about. He had cut the baby's head in ugly gashes and given the mother a mixture of green leaves boiled together to rub into the wounds. Poor ignorant soul! She sat there torturing her baby in the belief that she was doing the only thing that could

save its life. Another baby had a great boil on its neck which would not come to a head until Miss Drummer's magic salve brought relief. The mother was sure the owner of the magic stuff was a god. The witch-doctors were the most wonderful of human beings, she knew; and no witch doctor could do a thing like that; it must be the work of a god!

After five years in Africa Miss Drummer wrote to a friend, "I hardly think you could enjoy the hardships here. I fit in like a cup in a saucer; but you see I've always had things hard. . . . I'm not reaping where another has sown, so I'm getting a taste of real heathenism. They think it folly to teach a woman anything but farm work. They think we ought to give them presents for letting us feed and teach a girl. . . . You have no conception of their heathenish customs. . . . I am glad from my soul that I came. Last Sunday I spoke to over two hundred people in one yard. We have all our services at the mission station in the morning, so the afternoon can be used for village work. All my services are outdoors.

"My regular work is in the orphanage with forty girls. This is our family. My co-worker has spent twenty-one years in Africa. She is a fine house-mother. We have six children under six years and two just on their legs for the first time and into all sorts of mischief. One has just poured a cup of sand in the middle of my clean

floor. But they are nice, if they are naughty sometimes. I have learned that everything human is human.

"I put a great part of my earnings in my work. I started to ask the Lord for twenty-five desks for the school; but I got ashamed and got up to answer the prayer myself. I am negotiating now. If my fifty dollars won't cover buying and freight, I will ask the Lord to raise what is lacking. Pray for me. I am engaged in the best of services, for the best of masters, and on the best of terms."

Miss Drummer has served not only her own people, but any who were in need. When she came home in 1911 she said she had nursed people of twelve nationalities. A Portuguese officer, out in the wilds, brought his young wife to this missionary nurse's home as the only place where medical care could be secured for her. When the wife went back home, Miss Drummer went with her to care for her and the baby through the hard journey. The officer wanted her to stay with them a while and rest; but her work called her. After paying his wife's expenses, he gave Miss Drummer fifty dollars personally as an expression of his gratitude. At that time she had some more prayers on hand to answer herself, so she spent ten dollars for a silver watch and gave the rest of the money to the orphanage.

In 1918 Miss Drummer came home on furlough again and spoke at many white missionary gath-

erings with telling effect. She did not like their prayers, she said, so one day she told them about it. She said they all prayed for China and Japan and India and the islands of the sea and Mexico and South America, "and all the rest." It was that "all the rest" she was tired of. "There isn't any 'all the rest' but Africa," she said. "Call it by its name. Say 'Africa' when you pray, and then maybe you will think to pray for it oftener."

In Boston she made so strong an appeal for her medical work that a thousand dollars was given her from the floor before she could sit down. She made them *see* her people, the suffering old folk, the poor, hopeless mothers, the little children, as ready to learn kindness and happiness and to grow strong and healthy as any of the children of the world.

When she returned to Africa, she bought a donkey for near-by trips, as riding would be cheaper than going in a hammock. He was such a solemn donkey that she named him Jeremiah. He was very gentle and went beautifully on dry land, but he refused entirely to cross a stream or to step in a muddy place. He was gentle, but inflexible. So she had to sell him, saying that "a stubborn donkey without rubbers" was not much help in mission work in such a new country.

Trips make up a large part of the work of a missionary in Africa. The longer ones must be taken in the dry season and often occupy several

weeks. Where it is possible, two missionaries go together, with five or six bearers apiece for their hammocks and baggage. Much of their food must be carried in a box as nearly insect-proof as possible. This box is all the furniture, except the camp-beds, they have with them. After they take out their food and granite plates, they sit on the chest while they eat. If they forget the salt or anything else, they must both stand up while they hunt it out. Men, women, and children crowd about them while they eat, touching them, feeling their clothes, peering at them, and talking about their looks, their food, and the way they eat it, until meal-time is an ordeal gladly ended.

At first Miss Drummer felt she must share her food with all these curious and sometimes hungry folk, but she found she could not possibly carry enough for the throngs of even a single village; she had to keep the contents of her box for herself or give up all thought of missionary journeys. And after all, she found this enforced eating in public a very good way of advertising her presence and attracting a crowd to hear the story she had come so far to tell.

The instant the plates are back in the box, and before the people begin to scatter, Miss Drummer gets them to sit down on the grass and begins to sing a hymn, teaching it to them line by line. "Jesus loves me" is usually the one she begins with, and they are quick to learn it. Then she

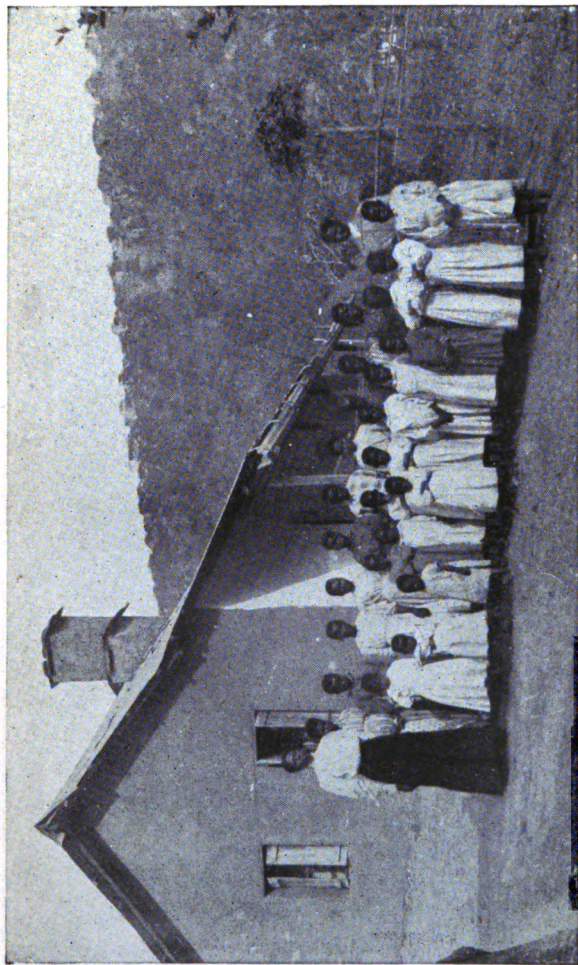
reads and explains a few verses from the Bible and closes with a short prayer.

One evening she and her helper came to a village called Ngala. The chief gave them the biggest half of his two-room hut to sleep in. He and his family took the smaller room, and the missionaries put their camp-beds in one end of the other, curtaining off with the hammocks a place at the other end for their ten bearers to sleep on mats. The chief's goats and chickens slept in the room also, and plenty of rats—no, the rats didn't sleep! That was their time for exercise. The missionaries got some eggs and sweet potatoes in the village and cooked their supper on a little outdoor fire. They had a prayer-meeting in the hut. Miss Drummer and her helper sat on the bed, one holding the candle, the other reading the Bible and talking. The room was packed with young and old, all straining to catch a word. Nor would they go away when the meeting was over until the candle was put out and there was no more chance to stare at the strangers.

Next morning nearly two hundred of the villagers went a couple of miles with them on their way, begging, as they so often do, for some one to come and stay with them and teach them "the new way." Miss Drummer finds that everywhere she goes, the songs that they like best are those that tell of the great Friend, and of the love of God. They need a Friend so much!

One night she came to a village where the only shelter to be had was a hut with only two-and-a-half sides to it. The bearers stretched the hammocks around the open part to keep out wild animals. Just as they were dropping off to sleep after the meeting, they heard terrible noises—a hyena attacking a cow. The government does not allow the natives to have firearms, so the whole village got out of bed to make noise enough to scare the hyena away. They screamed and ran about with fishing-spears and with feathers and horns stuck on their heads. They were afraid the visitors had made the hyena so bold, for while there are many all about, they do not often come right into the village as this one did and kill a hog and attack a cow. Miss Drummer was afraid the people would not come to her meeting in the morning, but they did, and afterward they went along the road with her for quite a distance. .

One great trouble on these journeys is the difficulty of finding water. They must get down by a wayside stream to do their washing, for they can hardly carry enough clothes to last without laundering on these long trips. Sometimes as they scrub things in the stream, they hear a panther or a hyena howling near by and decide it is best to move on. On reaching the villages, they may find the nearest water is a mile or two away, and when they go to it, it may be covered with green scum. Thirsty as they are, they cannot



MISS MARTHA DRUMMER (AT THE LEFT) AND THE GIRLS' SCHOOL AT QUESSUA





drink it, but they boil it and make tea or cocoa and drink that.

The women in these villages work very hard. They do all the work in the fields, from planting to harvesting, as well as all the work in the homes. One heavy task is the making of flour. For this they dig and dry the root of the manioca, a plant which grows in great abundance, and pound it fine. No wonder they do not have time to think about the way they look. There are mats to be woven for the houses, baskets to be made for bringing in the crops, skins to dress, and so on. Usually the men fight and hunt, but occasionally they work. Once Miss Drummer found an old chief crippled with leprosy setting an example of industry to his people by making rope. But perhaps if he had not been crippled, he too would have been hunting or fighting.

Some things we spend a good deal of time on, these people make very short work of. For instance, think how mothers in this country comb and brush their own and their children's hair every day. An African woman does the family's hair to last for months or even years. She powders up a red stone, mixes it with oil, and rubs it in until the hair is all dyed red. Then she does it up in funny little tight braids all over the head, and that child's hair is off her mind for good. Our notions about hair seem very peculiar to them. Once a white missionary went on a trip with Miss

Drummer. They crowded into the room, as usual, and they thought the missionary's hair the very queerest thing their eyes had ever beheld. It was so straight and funny, with such a queer, big knot. They said she looked like a "hoje," or lion, with a big mane. So you see our being accustomed or unaccustomed to things has a great deal to do with our thinking them ugly or pretty.

One day when Miss Drummer was nearing a village she met the chief and some of his people going hunting. They turned back and went to the village with her, saying to each other they didn't dare not to, for the gods had come and would be angry with them if they didn't listen to them. The chief said he would call his people in his other villages. This he did by means of a telephone of real African make. They brought out a "drum," which was a hollow log with holes all down the sides, and they beat it with little wooden mallets. The sound carries for miles, and it means, "Come quick. It's the chief's orders." It would be a very bold man who would disobey a summons like that. They can send other messages, too, for they have a code of long and short taps that can be made into all sorts of sentences.

In one of the many villages where the people begged for teachers they said, when Miss Drummer told them there was no one to send, "Oh, surely you can find one person to send! And

if you will, we will build a hut for her. Send us just one." And think of all the people here in America who are not doing anything to really help other people, and who could so easily go!

The people in Africa are ready to learn. On her way back from one of these long trips Miss Drummer met some men from a village she had been to a couple of weeks before. They were out hunting. They told her they had been keeping Sunday since she had been there. They wanted a teacher, too. Some miles further down the road the missionaries heard some little children singing "Jesus loves me," and came upon a company from another village who had heard in some way that the missionaries were coming on their way back home. The old crippled chief was with them, hobbling along on his cane. He said they had been in such a dangerous country he had expected them to be killed by the natives, and he was so glad they had escaped. They had had no trouble at all, God had taken care of His children who trusted Him.

It is no easy task being a missionary in Africa. But Martha Drummer has found out that "everything human is human." May God give us each an understanding heart, that need in any guise may draw us, and that we may recognize our brothers and love them wherever and whatever they may be!

## XI

### SURE FOUNDATIONS

**I**N Wake County, N. C., James Dunston was born, before the war, but born free, as his father had been, before him. His father's parents had been set free by their owner before his father's birth; but why the thing was done, he does not know.

Before the Civil War, there were almost half a million of "free people of color," as they were called, in the United States. Most of them were in the South, and the causes of their freedom were numerous. Frequently a master allowed a very efficient or favored slave to take charge of himself. Such a man, usually skilled in some trade, would hire himself out, paying his master a stated sum each year and keeping the rest for himself. In this way, not infrequently, slaves saved enough to buy themselves; and sometimes they were able to buy their wives and children too.

Many were set free because their masters did not believe in slavery. George Washington's will provided that all his slaves should be set free at his wife's death; but Mrs. Washington, we are told, as soon as she learned of this provision insisted on their being set free at once. Some mas-

ters, like John Randolph, of Virginia, not only set their slaves free, but bequeathed money to buy land for them in a free state and to transport them thither. In this way several prosperous colonies were planted in the Middle West.

Some slaves were set free in gratitude or affection, after especially faithful service. A few won their freedom by some deed of courage or sacrifice. There is the famous case of the slave in Charleston, South Carolina, who saved St. Michael's Church from the flames. This quaint and ancient Episcopal church, one of the oldest in the country, whose bricks were brought from England in colonial times, and in which many of the state's most distinguished men have worshipped, is dear to all South Carolinians regardless of church affiliations. The story goes that a fire which swept a whole section of the city was stayed by herculean effort before it reached the church; but just as it was thought to be safe, a great gust of wind blew a bit of burning timber high against the old wooden steeple, where it caught and lodged. A groan went up from the crowd. The church seemed doomed, for human hands could never reach that dangerous peak. The people stood in silent sorrow, watching. Suddenly, from a slit-like window on the side of the steeple there appeared a man who began to climb up towards the brand. The crowd below, thrilled by his heroism, expected every second to see him

fall to his death; he was attempting the impossible. Yet, as if by miracle, he went on. Higher and higher he crept. At last he reached and seized the brand and flung it clear of the beloved building, down to the churchyard, harmless. A great shout went up—to be stilled instantly. Could the man possibly come down safely? Must he pay with his life for the church? The people watched, breathless, till he reached the window again and disappeared inside. A sigh of relief swept over the crowd. Who was he, this hero? They searched one another's faces to see which of their everyday companions was absent, turned hero in an hour. The church door opened—and a Negro slave came forth. The story, as told long after by the old sexton, goes that when he stepped out, for a moment Charleston gasped—then it cheered! The mayor ran forward and caught the black man's hand, and after the mayor came the crowd. The slave's master, who was among them, then and there gave him the freedom he had so bravely earned.

But these fortunate freedmen were the exception. The lot of such people was often harder than that of slaves. With no white people to look to for protection or to care for them in sickness or old age, often looked upon with suspicion by their white neighbors, envied, perhaps, and yet despised by the slaves, unable to mingle freely with their

own race, and exploited by unscrupulous white people from whom they had no protection, life was indeed difficult for many of this class.

James Dunston's parents found it so. His father rented land from a white farmer and worked as hard as he could. But the land was poor, nothing was known about scientific agriculture, and farm machinery was a thing of the future. The family was large, and the task of filling the hungry mouths was almost more than the father and mother could manage. They lived in a poor little cabin and knew nothing about the most ordinary comforts of life. But both parents were devout Christians, and they brought up their children with Christian ideals of honesty and kindness in all their doings.

James had one great ambition: he wanted to learn to read. But at that time there were no schools for Negroes anywhere. Had he been a slave, he might have been fortunate enough to find among "his white folks" somebody—his Christian mistress, perhaps, or one of her daughters—who would have gratified his great desire and started him on the path to knowledge. But who was there to teach a free Negro, a bit of driftwood on the current of life, for whom nobody cared, and whose existence mattered to nobody? He knew what a wild dream his was, and yet he clung to it.



With poor food and poorer shelter as work's utmost reward, he grew up working on his father's rented place. When he was fifteen he became a Christian and joined the church. This was in 1866. Not long after, a wonderful thing happened: in a log hut not very far away, a school was opened for Negroes! And the school-teacher was a Negro—miracle number two! James was tremendously excited about it. He was going to that school whether he had anything to eat or not. He was going to learn to read.

The boy got a blue-backed spelling book and started in, as eager a scholar as ever a teacher had. But it was only a little while before his hopes were all in ruins. He found that he already knew as much as his teacher did. He had come to the end of that road. The poor "teacher" did not even know his own ignorance. He knew the alphabet and a few words and could spell out some others. What more in the way of learning could one aspire to!

James, however, was determined to read the whole Bible right straight through, like—well, like white folks. Now that he had the key to words, he meant to unlock the Book. If he couldn't have a teacher to help him, he must work it out for himself, for read he must and would. And he did.

He clung to his blue-backed speller and his Bible until he mastered both. It took him years to do it in the brief times of rest between his long

hours of work in the field. He married, meantime, when he was about twenty years old, and he and his wife started in on the same treadmill life his parents lived—renting a few poor acres and a little cabin and working from sun-up till dark for just enough to keep them alive.

But after a while James Dunston faced the astonishing fact that he was getting a little ahead—a few dollars left at the end of the year and never a cent of debt! New vistas opened before him. He really had the gift of farming as some have the gift of music. For one thing, he dearly loved it and felt the life of the earth very close to that of the God he loved. No trouble was too small or too great for him to take with growing things. He used his wits, too, and profited by his own experience and that of others, as far as he could learn it. While he was still very young, he began to be called a good farmer.

“The white folks called me that,” he said, with a smile as shy as a child’s. “I hope you won’t think I’m boasting—I don’t mean it that way—I just worked hard, and I got the name of doing well with the land.”

Seven years from the time he was married, Dunston bought his first land, four whole acres of it, and all his very own! To this poor freed-man of the third generation it must have been a wonderful day. He still rented a place and made a little more than a living on it, but his own land

was clear profit. Before long the four acres had grown to thirty-five. He felt that he had now mastered adversity, and the future lay plain before him, so far as material things were concerned.

In other respects it was not at all clear. He was studying his Bible harder than ever, for he had learned to read it all at last and knew much of it by heart. The simplicity and sincerity of his faith made it easy for him to see how simple a thing our Lord's way of living is. He wanted with all his heart to tell other people about it.

"But how could I preach?" he asked, that curious child-look again in his eyes. "I was so ignorant. I'm ignorant yet. And for me to set up to teach my people! I was ashamed of myself for even thinking about it. I kept telling myself it wasn't the Lord calling me, it wasn't anything but my own foolishness. The Lord *couldn't* want anybody like me to preach. I would put it clean out of my head. And then it would come back. I couldn't get away from it. It kept on that way for years.

"At last I gave in. I was always ready to give in if the Lord really wanted me, of course, and at last it looked to me like maybe He did, and I'd better try it and do the best I could. That would be all He'd ask."

Mr. Dunston began to preach in 1882. He kept right on with his farming all the week—he had

to do that to live—but he began to preach to his neighbors right there where he lived, and they gave him two hundred and fifty dollars a year. All this time he was taking care of his wife, who was an invalid until her death, a few years ago.

“We went through bad times here in North Carolina after the War—reconstruction times, folks called them. It was bad, and it stirred up trouble that lasted a long time. There were some white folks wanted to use the colored folks, especially about election time. It was too much politics; and it wasn’t for our good. Our folks were so poor and so ignorant, and they kept expecting somebody to come along and do something for them or give them something instead of their getting right down to work and doing something for themselves with what muscle and sense the Lord gave them. I made the condition of my people a subject of prayer for years, and their relations with white people, too. And I saw what they needed: they needed to work, to fix up their houses, to educate their children, and quit depending on politics.”

After Dunston understood what was needed, he tried to settle some of the Negroes on land they could buy for themselves. He wanted to help them to own their homes and be independent. He secured two thousand acres, and let the people pay for it as fast as they made the money. By this time he owned three hundred acres himself

and began with nothing, so he knew others could do the same if they would.

"But how could you finance so big a project?" he was asked.

He gave a little chuckling laugh, whether of amusement at the simplicity of any one who could be puzzled over a matter so clear or of happiness in the help which had been given him, one could not tell.

"Why, the Lord tended to the finances, ma'am: I just had to do the part I could manage. I knew three white men who had plenty of money, and they knew me and trusted me. They wouldn't have lent the money to the men I wanted to help—they didn't know them like I did. But they lent it to me. Then I picked men I knew I could depend on.

"Every man on that two thousand acres owns his farm and house now." The farms run from fifty acres to a hundred and sixty. His own land was right alongside, and he lived with the men, plowing and working and running his farm, and of course showing them everything he knew and could learn about right ways of farming. On Sundays they all went to Mr. Dunston's church—that first church he took when he began to preach, and where he has been preaching ever since. They built up a good, strong community of Christian people, happy and prosperous, right there on their own land.

Of course, they had to have a school. It was a long time ago when all this was started, and school money was then hard to get even for white people, and much harder for colored people. The county board of education agreed that if they would get the land and bear half the cost of the building, the county would bear the other half. The matron at Shaw University, in Raleigh, had some lots in the village. She gave enough land for the school, and the people gave their part of the building, some in money and some in work. As they became able to do so, they improved the school.

As time went on other villages in that section of the county grew, and the pastor felt the need of more churches. He persuaded about twenty of his members at Shiloh, the original church, to form a new society at Mebane, which was nearer their farms than the old church. There he built up a second membership, dividing time between the two churches on Sundays and working on his farm and with his neighbors during the week. At Mebane he preached the same doctrines that had proved so effective at Shiloh: that religion meant living right every day in one's home and with one's neighbors; and that it also meant honest work, thrift, and a fair chance for the children.

In time, after the same manner, a third and a fourth church were added to his charge. Then, the two thousand acres being bought and paid for, he secured fourteen hundred acres more,

which is still in process of being paid for by the settlers.

"But I'm not farming myself now," he said, with a touch of what would have been regret if he had not been so sure that everything in life happens just right for the man who trusts in God. "You see, I'm seventy years old now, and I'm not—well, not exactly able to work quite so hard. I did my own plowing as long as I could walk between the handles, but for three or four years now I've had rather to oversee things and tend to my preaching, and have somebody else do the real work. I've been farming ever since I was a little boy, but now I've got to where most of my farming is done."

"You've helped a lot of people with your farming," it was suggested.

"Yes'm, I have, with the Lord's help. And I've been able to help with money, too. 'Tisn't so much, and yet in all these years it counts up, too. Three or four years after I began to preach, I promised the Lord I'd give a tenth of all I made to His work, and I've always had a little something ready when it was needed—twenty-five dollars or maybe fifty; I've never had more than fifty at one time, but then after a while I'd have some more, and in thirty-five years it's right surprising how much it all comes to."

I was talking to him after service at one of his four churches. I had gone eighteen miles in the

country from Durham to see the man whom hard-headed business men of his race speak of as though he were of different clay from the ordinary run of people. "The best Christian I ever knew," said one of them; and another, whose own religion is respected and believed in by men of both races, said in a tone which lent wonderful meaning to his words, "I wish you could *see* him"—as if nothing short of that would enable one to understand quite what he was like.

So I went to one of his churches, where he had been holding a ten days' meeting. It is a well-kept building, freshly painted, and seating about two hundred people. It was well over half full, this week-day morning. As I went up the steps, I heard through the open windows the quiet, earnest voice of the preacher. He had closed his meeting the night before and baptized his converts. This was just a little farewell talk with the new Christians before he went on his way. They sat on the two front benches, with a goodly gathering of young people behind them and the older members on the sides, while he stood behind the altar railing and told them what being a Christian means.

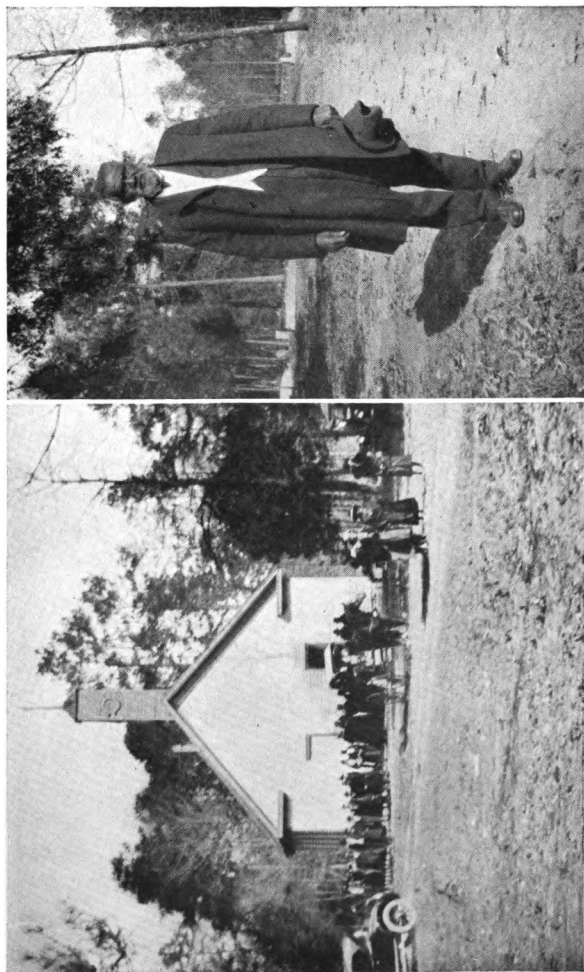
He may not know very much about books, but he knows the Book—he was saturated with it. He said nothing about creed or doctrines, he was talking about the life of Christ in the heart. He stood there in his spotless linen and worn, well-brushed



clothes, an upright, gray-haired old man with a fresh, young, unlined face, and a look of one long acquainted with God and joyfully at peace with Him. There was something child-like about him—his simplicity, his lack of self-consciousness. When the service was over and I spoke to him, he talked with me with a sort of gentle shyness which had in it neither distrust nor self-depreciation.

The people, young and old, gave him all their attention; the entrance of a white stranger passed almost unnoticed. They were country people, but they were all comfortably and nicely dressed, clean, healthy, prosperous-looking people. There were a number of men in middle life in the congregation—men who had left their farms in working hours to hear this old man talk about his Master. When he finished and went down to the front benches to shake hands with the new members and bid them Godspeed, the whole membership rose and followed his example. It seemed to the on-looker, as they filed past, that in the older faces was reflected something of the preacher's look. One old woman, especially, had almost the same air of shining peace.

Somehow the old man seemed typical of Christ's work for men in all countries and races and through the centuries. Most of the service men need cannot be given by learned or gifted people—there are not enough of them to go around. No



REV. JAMES H. DUNSTON AND ONE OF THE CHURCHES HE MINISTERS TO



unusual equipment is necessary to really help—no unusual gifts; only an unusual faithfulness in the use of ordinary gifts, such faithfulness as any of us may bring to our service if we will. And when we bring it, He uses it like this. All over the world it is love of Him in somebody's heart that has laid, and is yet laying, foundations of character, of opportunity, of higher ideals, of cleaner, happier, everyday living among poor and hitherto unfriended folk, lifting them from whatever depth they may be in toward that high end for which mankind was made.

It was this simple, loving, faithful service from some who had come to know God that first lifted our own savage ancestors, and many another wild race, and set their feet on the long road toward Christian civilization. All over the South to-day, among the poorest, this force is at work. It is like the lifting power of light, silently, the world around, drawing unnumbered tons of cold, dark earth into the beauty and glory of green leaves and flowers and food for a hungry world.

This old man, James Dunston, as he goes from village to village, with the peace of God in his face, is one of the real builders of America's prosperity and progress. It is people of his spirit who lay the real foundations of race or national life—the only foundations that can endure.

## XII

### A SEED OF FLAME

**W**HEN Negro literature is mentioned, most white people think of Paul Laurence Dunbar, the great Negro poet whom William Dean Howells discovered, and of whom he proclaimed to all America that, Negro or no Negro, here was a writer "of innate distinction" whose "refined and delicate art" attained "a very artistic completeness." Dunbar has been widely read, and his gifts as widely acknowledged. To many white people he still represents the whole of Negro literature. Others, however, add a few names to his. No one who has read Dr. DuBois's *Souls of Black Folk* will deny that it is literature of most unusual quality, or will they soon forget its haunting beauty. Readers of the *Atlantic Monthly* know Chesnutt's stories and the poems of Braithwaite, whose work has also appeared in the *Century*. Mr. Braithwaite is distinguished as both poet and critic, having served in the latter capacity on the staff of the *Boston Transcript* for many years. Since 1913 he has issued a yearly anthology, giving the best poems of the year which have appeared in American periodicals. He edits the *New Poetry Review* of

Cambridge, and is general editor of the series of *Contemporary American Poets*.

Of these four men, Dunbar, born in 1872, was the youngest. Of the still younger generation of Negro writers, few white people are aware. One reason for this is that the younger men, growing up in a new time, are passionately concerned for justice to their race. They have chosen between protest and literature, and men like James Weldon Johnson and others of his class, who could undoubtedly achieve distinction in the latter field, are pouring their gifts and energies into other channels. There will be those after them, they say, to write essays and novels and poems; their work is something more pressing.

But this story is of none of these. It is the story of one who barely crossed the threshold of manhood, of a poet most of whose poems were still unwritten when his long struggle with suffering ended in the fulness of life and light.

There was no struggle against hardship in this boy's youth, no fight for an education against odds. His father had waged that fight and won it splendidly before the boy was born. The son opened his baby eyes in a home of comfort and refinement and grew up a boy of brilliant promise, an only son, and the idol of his parents.

His father, Joseph S. Cotter, for whom the boy was named, was the son of a slave who was herself the daughter of free Negroes, but in some

way she had been bonded as a slave. She must have seemed a strange woman, with much of her life beyond the understanding of the slaves about her. She worked hard, but she sang a great deal, improvising her songs as she worked. She made up plays and acted them before her admiring fellow-slaves. She was a deeply religious woman who was sometimes caught up into religious ecstasies. There was plainly something in her quite different from those about her. In thinking of her and of her son and her grandson, in whom her own strange spark of life flamed up, one is reminded of Browning's lines:

God drops his seed of heavenly flame  
Just where He wills on earth.

Looking at the slave woman, "the naked unpreparedness of rock" seems best to describe the barren circumstances into which the seed had fallen for her. For a long time life seemed little more propitious for her son. He learned to read when he was four years old, but forgot all about it, being long unused to books; so that when, in his early twenties, he entered night-school, he had to learn the alphabet all over again.

But he used some of his gifts in those lean years, nevertheless. At ten years of age he was working with boys and men in a brickyard in Louisville, Kentucky. He was set upon by the bigger boys and much tormented. Knowing the hopelessness of physical resistance, Joseph set his wits to

work. He noticed that in the noon hour the men gathered around those of their number who could tell a good story. Why shouldn't boys do the same? And something within him told him he could furnish the stories. So he tried it and found it worked like a charm. The boys forgot to tease and crowded round him with growing respect and interest. The men, noticing their absorption from day to day, began to stroll over to investigate, and before long there was only one group at the noon hour—boys and men gathered around the little black boy, listening to the tales which he daily fashioned for them out of his own fancies.

At the age of twenty-two, hunger for an education stirred within him, and he went to night-school, beginning with the alphabet. In two years' time he was prepared to teach, and from that day to this he has been a student. He became principal of the Louisville Coleridge-Taylor school, named in honor of the great Negro musician who lives in London and is ranked as one of the foremost composers of our time. Mr. Cotter's work, however, is not confined to the school. When Louisville, first of all Southern cities, opened playgrounds for colored children, this older Joseph Cotter gave them a story-hour. He does the same thing at the two colored branches of the Louisville Public Library, and is helping to inspire and train in the same fine



art young teachers and the children who will one day teach. He owns a comfortable home and a library especially rich in poetry. He has his mother's love of poetry and her gift, with a finer power of expression. A poet himself, he first made Dunbar known among his own people in the South, quick to acknowledge in another the gift he himself shared.

Into this home came Joseph Cotter, Jr., in September, 1895. He and his sister Florence, who was two years older, grew up together, devoted friends and chums. Florence taught Joseph to read. When he started to school at the mature age of six, he had read about thirty books, including the readers of all the eight grades of the public schools and parts of the Bible.

The parents, seeing how eagerly their children learned, very wisely held them back. They were both rather delicate, and their father and mother felt that sound bodies were of the first importance. Several times they refused consent when the children's teachers would have given them more rapid promotion; yet even so, Florence graduated from high school at sixteen with first honors, and Joseph, two years later, graduated at the same age, with second honors. He was first in scholarship, but some bit of mischief had forced his teachers to discipline him, and so he was given second place.

He seems to have been a real boy, for all his

physical delicacy and his voracious love of books. He worked hard as a newsboy, and while he was still a little fellow, he and his friends formed a grass-cutting club and made it pay. He did not waste the money he earned, but showed self-control and good sense in managing it. He was interested in doing all he could for himself.

The boy was an enthusiast in athletics and distinguished himself in them. He was especially fond of football, which he played well despite his slight physique. He always said it took brains rather than muscle to play football anyway, and the handicap he would not yield to could not block his way. While he was in high school, his jaw was broken by a base-ball and had to be wired in place. For two weeks he could not open his mouth, and was fed liquids through a straw; but he kept on attending school, doing his work well.

He was a quiet chap, with gentle and courteous manners; but if he felt it necessary, he would fight, giving his entire interest and attention to the matter in hand. He was popular because he thought of others. One of his great gifts was the power to draw people out, and he was always ready to help them discover the best in themselves.

Joseph was as fond of books as of people. The books of poetry in his father's library especially appealed to him, and he drank deep of this great spring of literature and of life.

That he should be particularly well-informed on the race question seems a matter of course; the significant thing is that his interest was never confined to it. His alert and eager mind went out to the whole world, to everything that concerned the Race of Man, to which all races belong. He was a keen student of world history and world movements, and this explains the poise and balance of his outlook on the problems of the race with which he himself was identified. This attitude is well shown in the following poem which is not only filled with a courage that looks facts and the world squarely in the face but is saturated with serenity of soul:

**The Mulatto to His Critics**

Ashamed of my race?  
And of what race am I?  
I am many in one.  
Through my veins there flows the blood  
Of Red Man, Black Man, Briton, Celt, and Scot,  
In warring clash and tumultuous riot.  
I welcome all,  
But love the blood of the kindly race  
That swarths my skin, crinkles my hair,  
And puts sweet music into my soul.

“And puts sweet music into my soul.” That is especially the dower of African blood. It pours out in kindly laughter and friendly human cheerfulness amid circumstances which would turn Nordic blood to gall or flame. It wells up to God in the strange, soul-moving melody of the “spiritu-als” out of slavery itself. White slaves have



*Photo by Evans Studio, Louisville, Ky.*

**JOSEPH S. COTTER, JR.**



attained spiritual vision—Epictetus is undying witness to that, but did ever a whole race of slaves lift their hearts in song before? When the races of men are all developed and the contribution of each to the Race of Man can be defined, that of the African race will be based on this very quality—that it “puts sweet music into my soul.”

After finishing at high school, Joseph followed his sister to Fisk University at Nashville. He was there for a year and a half when he developed tuberculosis and was forced to come home. For six years he fought a good fight, his soul conquering, his body going under, slipping down toward the last surrender in increasing weakness and pain. As long as he could move, he worked. He was associate editor of the *Louisville Leader*, a position which suited him and which he filled with ability.

In December of the year in which Joseph left the university, his sister Florence was stricken with the same disease and came home, as he had done, to go under the doctor's care. She died just a year later, in December, 1914.

This was a heavy sorrow. The family was a deeply affectionate one, and the tie between the brother and sister was unusually close. It was while visiting her grave, some months after her death, that the impulse came upon him to express his grief in verse, and he wrote there the lines, “To Florence,” which began his career as

a poet. He recognized clearly that it was a question of but a short time before his own body would be laid beside hers, but he went on, meeting life as best he could from day to day, with failing strength but with a valiant heart. He had the best of medical care, and the white physician who attended him said that for courage, patience, and cheerfulness, he was, during the six years of his illness, the most remarkable patient he had ever had.

One of his special friends in the grass-cutting club of his boyhood was Abram Simpson, the youngest colored captain in the World War, and now a banker in Louisville. While he was facing death in France, Joseph, his friend, was facing it here at home in the silence of his quiet room.

But no one who suffers much and yet turns to those about him a steady and cheerful spirit can achieve that victory without times of fierce inward struggle. Yet in the little book of poems published a year before his death there is but one hint of discouragement. It is this short poem:

**Supplication**

I am so tired and weary,  
So tired of the endless fight,  
So weary of waiting the dawn  
And finding endless night,  
That I ask but rest and quiet—  
Rest for the days that are gone,  
And quiet for the little space  
That I must journey on.

Next to this, however, we find the following:

**The Goal**

I have found joy,  
Surcease from sorrow,  
From qualms for today  
And fears for tomorrow.

I have found love  
Sifted of pain,  
Of life's harsh goading  
And worldly disdain.

I have found peace  
Still-born from grief,  
From soul's bitter mocking,  
And heart's unbelief.

Now may I rest,  
Soul-glad and free;  
For, Lord, in the travail  
I have found Thee.

That his pure joy in the beauty of the world  
about him was fresh and keen this lyric witnesses,  
almost singing itself:

**Rain Music**

On the dusty earth-drum  
Beats the falling rain,  
Now a whispered murmur,  
Now a louder strain.

Slender silvery drumsticks,  
On an ancient drum,  
Beat the mellow music,  
Bidding life to come.

Chords of earth awakened,  
Notes of greening spring,  
Rise and fall triumphant  
Over everything.

Slender silvery drumsticks  
Beat the long tattoo—  
God, the great musician,  
Calling life anew.



172.      *In the Vanguard of a Race*

The little book of poems published before his death takes its name, *The Band of Gideon*, from the first poem in the book, a weird fancy of storm-driven black clouds, which seems akin to some of the old "spirituals." The book is manifestly the work of youth and as such, immature. "A Prayer" voices his own consciousness of this, and his desire to work out in well-wrought lines that which he sees with the eyes of his soul but cannot yet fully express.

**A Prayer**

As I lie in bed,  
Flat on my back,  
There passes across my ceiling  
An endless panorama of things—  
Quick steps of gay-voiced children,  
Adolescence in its wondering silences,  
Maid and man on moonlit summer's eve,  
Women in the holy glow of motherhood,  
Old men gazing silently through the twilight  
Into the beyond.  
O God, give me words to make my dream-children live.

The strongest poem in the book, with one exception, is a sonnet, "To the Negro Soldiers." Confined to his bed by suffering, he was now often too weak to write or to think, but his heart was with his comrades who had gone to the front, and with them he hoped most passionately that the loyalty and sacrifice of Negro Americans during the war would win for the race a better justice here at home and fuller respect as citizens.

**To the Negro Soldiers**

They shall go down unto Life's Borderland,  
Walk unafraid within that Living Hell,  
Nor heed the driving rain of shot and shell  
That round them falls; but with uplifted hand  
Be one with mighty hosts, an armed band  
Against man's wrong to man—for such full well  
They know. And from their trembling lips shall swell  
A song of hope the world can understand.  
All this to them shall be a glorious sign,  
A glimmer of that resurrection morn  
When age-long faith, crowned with a grace benign,  
Shall rise and from their brows cast down the thorn  
Of prejudice. E'en though through blood it be,  
There breaks this day their dawn of liberty.

Joseph Cotter's best work was done for the most part after the publication of his book. It is found in a sequence of nineteen love-sonnets of remarkable beauty and workmanship for so young a man. They are published in the *A. M. E. Zion Quarterly Review* for the third quarter of 1920. The last one, especially, of the little child

Who never was, nor is, nor e'er shall be.

is of a moving and haunting beauty. He left these sonnets, with a few short poems and one-act plays, unpublished at his death.

He sank toward death for years, fighting at every step. At the last, sight and hearing failed him, yet his whispered words were still of courage and cheer. He died in his father's arms on the third day of February, 1919.

Considering his youth and the heavy handicap of illness during those few years, when, even in

full vigor, his powers would but have been putting forth their first buds, his literary achievements are full of promise—a promise which in God's own time will find fulfilment in a broader life than this. One quality of his work is its direct and full sincerity. This quality blazes through what is, to the writer, the strongest of all his poems. There is no bitterness in it, nor was there any in his life, yet he knew the facts—knew them better and knew more of them, doubtless, than we white people ever do. And what he knew he felt. He was fully identified in his own heart and will with the Negro race—his people, entirely his people, though strains of many races mingled in his life. But feeling as he did the injustices from which his people suffer, he asks without rancor or reproach of his white brother:

**And What Shall You Say?**

Brother, come!  
And let us go unto our God.  
And when we stand before Him  
I shall say—  
"Lord, I do not hate,  
I am hated.  
I scourge no one,  
I am scourged.  
I covet no lands,  
My lands are coveted.  
I mock no peoples,  
My peoples are mocked."  
—And, brother, what shall you say?

The longer one thinks of it, the deeper that question presses in, the more one feels its quiet,

inescapable power. The words fit the thought and the thought the truth—the truth as regards a whole great section of American life—as a glove fits the hand. It is a question which will eventually compel its answer, and as it is answered, will the fate of America be. This book, put forth by the Council of Women for Home Missions and the Missionary Education Movement in the interest of justice and kindness between the races, is itself one of many indications, small and great, that in these later years the Christian mind is turning toward the right answer.

For too long white Christians felt that individual kindness and justice to individual Negroes was the full measure of Christian obligation. In the great awakening now upon the South is seen and felt the birth of a new consciousness and a new conscience—a sense of collective responsibility for community conditions. The North, industrially a generation in the lead, came by a social consciousness and a social conscience before the South. But North and South, there is needed a fuller awakening as regards both justice and kindness to our Negro brethren as a race. The individuals who have understood this are drawing together all over the country, and in every state their numbers grow. A new public opinion is creating new alignments, and old prejudices and foolish fears are “crystallizing out” in the process. True racial integrity is seen to involve the self-respect of

each race and mutual respect between the races. To keep each race separate and pure no man of either race must hate or scourge or mock or despise the other. All such enmity must cease. The young people coming on as well as those who are now leaders must, in the presence of God, settle the question,

“And, brother, what shall you say?”





